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**Letter dated 2 July 2018 from the Permanent Representatives of
Germany, Namibia and Spain to the United Nations addressed to
the Secretary-General**

Germany, together with Spain and Namibia, has the honour to transmit herewith the Chair's summary (see annex) of the debriefing in New York on the 2018 annual capital-level meeting of the Women and Peace and Security Focal Points Network, which was held in Berlin, Germany, on 9 and 10 April 2018. The New York debriefing was co-organized by our three countries on 24 May 2018 at Headquarters as a follow-up to the Berlin meeting to discuss actions to be taken in New York.

The summary contains the numerous and practical recommendations for the implementation of the women and peace and security agenda that were made by participants during the meeting.

We should be grateful if the present letter and its annex would be circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda item 65, and of the Security Council.

(Signed) Christoph **Heusgen**

Ambassador

Permanent Representative of Germany to the United Nations

(Signed) Neville Melvin **Gertze**

Ambassador

Permanent Representative of Namibia to the United Nations

(Signed) Jorge **Moragas**

Ambassador

Permanent Representative of Spain to the United Nations



Annex to the letter dated 2 July 2018 from the Permanent Representatives of Germany, Namibia and Spain to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Debriefing on the April 2018 Women and Peace and Security Focal Points Network meeting in Berlin, and follow-up actions in New York

Thursday, 24 May 2018

Chair's summary

On 24 May 2018, New York representatives of the Women and Peace and Security Focal Points Network met in New York for a debriefing on the annual capital-level meeting of the Network, which was held in Berlin, Germany, on 9 and 10 April 2018 under the theme "Building alliances to advance the women and peace and security agenda". About 60 permanent missions to the United Nations were represented at the debriefing, along with United Nations agencies and civil society organizations.

The Network currently has a membership of more than 80 States Members of the United Nations and regional organizations.¹ The leadership troika of the Network comprises Germany as current Chair of the Network, Spain as Chair for 2017 and Namibia as Chair for 2019. The United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women) serves as the permanent secretariat of the Network.

The debriefing, which was held at Headquarters, was hosted by the Permanent Representatives of Germany, Namibia and Spain to the United Nations, in collaboration with UN-Women, at the level of permanent and deputy permanent representatives of missions to the United Nations. The meeting objectives were:

- (a) To provide an overview of the activities of the Network to date;
- (b) To share highlights and recommendations from the Berlin meeting, including the joint communiqué;
- (c) To discuss how to translate the recommendations and outcomes of the Berlin meeting into concrete actions in the Security Council and other processes in New York and in capitals.

Discussion summary

Interventions were made by the Permanent Representative of Germany to the United Nations, Christoph Heusgen, the Permanent Representative of Spain to the United Nations, Jorge Moragas, and the Deputy Executive Director, Intergovernmental

¹ Afghanistan, Angola, Argentina, Australia, Austria, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Brazil, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Croatia, Cyprus, Czechia, Denmark, Egypt, El Salvador, Estonia, Ethiopia, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Guatemala, Hungary, Indonesia, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kuwait, Latvia, Liberia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malaysia, Mali, Malta, Mexico, Montenegro, Morocco, Namibia, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nigeria, Norway, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Senegal, Serbia, Sierra Leone, Slovakia, Slovenia, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sweden, Switzerland, Thailand, Tunisia, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom, United States of America, Uruguay, African Union, Council of Europe, Economic Community of West African States, European Union, North Atlantic Treaty Organization, Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, Union for the Mediterranean.

Support and Strategic Partnerships Bureau at UN-Women, Asa Regnér. Further interventions were made by the representatives of Colombia, the Economic Community of West African States, Sweden, Mexico, the NGO Working Group on Women, Peace and Security, Hungary, Canada, France, El Salvador, Switzerland, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Malaysia, Morocco and Liechtenstein. The discussion was moderated by the leader of the Team of Experts on the Rule of Law and Sexual Violence in Conflict, Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict, Kaoru Okuizumi.

Drawing from the communiqué of the Berlin meeting, attendees emphasized the importance of collaboration between local, national and regional actors to implement the women and peace and security agenda. They discussed how concrete action should be taken in New York to increase and safeguard gender expertise and women's participation in the security sector and in peacekeeping missions. Specific recommendations were made for comprehensive mainstreaming of the women and peace and security agenda into all relevant United Nations forums and to strengthen women and peace and security accountability mechanisms. Also underscored was the necessity for Member States to push back against the shrinking space for civil society. The importance of more focused collaboration between Network members serving on the Security Council and strengthening the Network's link with other mechanisms was also highlighted.

Summary of recommendations

Participation and representation

- Member States are encouraged to join the Network and ensure representation at the capital level at the 2019 annual meeting of the Network in Windhoek, Namibia.
- Include women briefers from Governments and civil society working on the ground at open debates and side events in all relevant United Nations forums, including the Security Council.
- Advocate gender expertise at the Secretariat and that women leaders be appointed as Secretary-General and Deputy Secretaries-General.
- Encourage the use of gender-disaggregated data to correctly diagnose women and peace and security problems and relevant statistics to enable the right actions to be taken.
- Ensure gender expertise in the field — senior gender advisers, women in peacekeeping operations and female personnel in other positions — with the support of defence ministries.
- Support the whole staffing of peacekeeping missions to include women and child protection advisers, judicial affairs and human rights officers and police officers who focus on sexual and gender-based violence.
- Promote a gender perspective in all peacekeeping operations at all levels, starting from the planning process, as well as a greater presence of women in peace negotiations, as mediators, candidates for high-level political operations and diplomats in multilateral forums.
- Member States should provide political and financial support for the work of women peacebuilders at the national, regional and international levels, particularly in the context of daily threats and intimidation.

- The Network should exercise its collective responsibility to protect civil society and women's rights organizations, and to preserve their rights and access.

Accountability and advocacy

- Member States should draw on the positive experiences made — across regions — with the designation of a specific focal point for women and peace and security and the adoption of a national action plan based on Security Council resolution 1325 (2000). National action plans should be complemented with action plans at the local, subregional and regional levels.
- Establish a stronger link between the implementation of the legally binding Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and the women and peace and security agenda.
- Make better use of the sanctions regimes of the Council to help to end impunity for sexual violence.
- Ensure more regular reactions of the Council in the form of press communiqués, press statements, etc., in any instance of conflict-related sexual violence.
- Ensure the application of a more gendered lens to national action plans and strategies on preventing and countering violent extremism.
- Engage men and boys in implementing the women and peace and security agenda and urge the Council to pay more consistent attention to sexual violence against men and boys.
- Network members should advocate gender considerations and the women and peace and security agenda in the work of the Peacebuilding Commission and the Peacebuilding Fund, the review in June of the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects and the second United Nations Chiefs of Police Summit, also in June.
- The mandates of peacekeeping missions should include the specific concerns of the women and peace and security agenda, including accountability for conflict-related sexual violence.
- The Network should make an impact on the language and implementation of the Council's mandate and highlight how civil society can contribute to the women and peace and security elements of the mandate implementation.
- Members of the Network who are also members of the Council should form a small group of friends in the Council and work closely to ensure the implementation of Network recommendations.

Building alliances

- Collaborate with existing mechanisms, such as the Group of Friends of Women, Peace and Security, the Informal Expert Group on Women and Peace and Security, the Group of Friends for Gender Parity and the International Gender Champions initiative on panel parity.
- Introduce the Berlin meeting communiqué and the issues raised in Network discussions to the Peacebuilding Commission in order to inform the work of the Commission.
- Developing and developed countries should work together more closely during negotiations in all domains at the United Nations and to ensure gender-sensitive declarations that include gender equality and women's economic empowerment.

- The Network should be vigilant and use its collective political strength to prevent the rollback of progress in women and peace and security issues, whether in constitutional or legislative reform.
- The Network should continuously highlight women and peace and security issues that are not in the spotlight.

Planned activities of the Network in 2018

The Network plans to host a side event on the margins of the seventy-third session of the General Assembly and an expert-level meeting in New York in the fourth quarter. The Network will also issue joint statements and newsletters over the course of the year.



Security Council

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Letter dated 5 July 2018 from the Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to transmit herewith information bulletins from the Russian Federation Ministry of Defence regarding the status of implementation of the Memorandum on the creation of de-escalation areas in the Syrian Arab Republic for the period from 3 to 5 July 2018 (see annex).

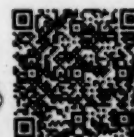
I should be grateful if you would have the present letter and its annex circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) V. Nebenzia

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Annex to the letter dated 5 July 2018 from the Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Information bulletin from the Russian Federation Ministry of Defence regarding the status of implementation of the Memorandum on the creation of de-escalation areas (3 July 2018)

Observance of the ceasefire regime

Monitoring groups have continued to monitor observance of the ceasefire regime as part of implementing the Memorandum on the creation of de-escalation areas in the Syrian Arab Republic, signed by the Russian Federation, the Republic of Turkey and the Islamic Republic of Iran on 4 May 2017.

The situation in the de-escalation areas has been assessed as stable.

The Russian representative office of the Russian and Turkish Joint Commission reviewing issues related to violations of the ceasefire regime has reported eight incidents of gunfire: seven in Ladhikiyah Governorate and one in Hama Governorate.

The Turkish representative office has not reported any incidents of gunfire.

Provision of humanitarian aid to the population of the Syrian Arab Republic

The Centre for Reconciliation of Opposing Sides in the Syrian Arab Republic has not carried out any humanitarian operations over the past 24 hours.

In total, 1,850 humanitarian operations have been carried out.

The total weight of humanitarian cargo delivered is 2,710.36 tons.

Over the past 24 hours, medical assistance has been provided to 10 residents.

In total, medical assistance has been provided to 85,271 residents.

Reconciliation of opposing sides

No ceasefire agreements have been signed over the past 24 hours.

The number of populated areas that have joined the reconciliation process is 2,518.

The number of armed groups that have announced their commitment to accepting and fulfilling the terms of the ceasefire is unchanged — it is still 234.

Information bulletin from the Russian Federation Ministry of Defence regarding the status of implementation of the Memorandum on the creation of de-escalation areas (4 July 2018)

Observance of the ceasefire regime

Monitoring groups have continued to monitor observance of the ceasefire regime as part of implementing the Memorandum on the creation of de-escalation areas in the Syrian Arab Republic, signed by the Russian Federation, the Republic of Turkey and the Islamic Republic of Iran on 4 May 2017.

The situation in the de-escalation areas has been assessed as stable.

The Russian representative office of the Russian and Turkish Joint Commission reviewing issues related to violations of the ceasefire regime has reported 12 incidents of gunfire in the following Governorates: 6 in Aleppo, 4 in Ladhqiyyah and 2 in Hama.

The Turkish representative office has not reported any incidents of gunfire.

Provision of humanitarian aid to the population of the Syrian Arab Republic

Over the past 24 hours, the Centre for Reconciliation of Opposing Sides in the Syrian Arab Republic has carried out three humanitarian operations: one in Hamra, Hama Governorate (650 food parcels with a total weight of 2.8 tons were delivered to people in need); one in Tat, Aleppo Governorate (650 food parcels with a total weight of 2.8 tons were delivered to people in need); and one in Yalda, Rif Dimashq Governorate (650 food parcels with a total weight of 2.8 tons were delivered to people in need).

In total, 1,853 humanitarian operations have been carried out.

The total weight of humanitarian cargo delivered is 2,718.76 tons.

Over the past 24 hours, medical assistance has been provided to 211 residents.

Reconciliation of opposing sides

No ceasefire agreements have been signed over the past 24 hours.

The number of populated areas that have joined the reconciliation process is 2,518.

The number of armed groups that have announced their commitment to accepting and fulfilling the terms of the ceasefire is unchanged — it is still 234.

Information bulletin from the Russian Federation Ministry of Defence regarding the status of implementation of the Memorandum on the creation of de-escalation areas (5 July 2018)

Observance of the ceasefire regime

Monitoring groups have continued to monitor observance of the ceasefire regime as part of implementing the Memorandum on the creation of de-escalation areas in the Syrian Arab Republic, signed by the Russian Federation, the Republic of Turkey and the Islamic Republic of Iran on 4 May 2017.

The situation in the de-escalation areas has been assessed as stable.

The Russian representative office of the Russian and Turkish Joint Commission reviewing issues related to violations of the ceasefire regime has reported eight incidents of gunfire in the following Governorates: five in Ladhikiyah, two in Aleppo and one in Hama.

The Turkish representative office has not reported any incidents of gunfire.

Provision of humanitarian aid to the population of the Syrian Arab Republic

Over the past 24 hours, the Centre for Reconciliation of Opposing Sides in the Syrian Arab Republic has carried out one humanitarian operation in Karak, Suwayda' Governorate: 1,000 food parcels with a total weight of 4.3 tons were delivered to people in need.

In total, 1,854 humanitarian operations have been carried out.

The total weight of humanitarian cargo delivered is 2,723.06 tons.

Over the past 24 hours, medical assistance has been provided to 18 residents.

In total, medical assistance has been provided to 85,500 residents.

Reconciliation of opposing sides

No ceasefire agreements have been signed over the past 24 hours.

The number of populated areas that have joined the reconciliation process is 2,518.

The number of armed groups that have announced their commitment to accepting and fulfilling the terms of the ceasefire is unchanged — it is still 234.

**Security Council**

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6 July 2018
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Letter dated 5 July 2018 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of Argentina to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

On instructions from my Government, I have the honour to refer to the item "Maintenance of international peace and security: mine action" which was considered by the Security Council at its 8304th meeting on Friday, 29 June 2018.

The Government of the Argentine Republic wishes to exercise its right of reply with regard to the statement made by the representative of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland in relation to the Malvinas Islands on that occasion.

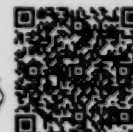
In this regard, the Argentine Republic reiterates the particular situation of the Malvinas Islands, in accordance with the content of the interpretative declaration that it made at the time of its ratification of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on Their Destruction (Ottawa Convention) on 14 September 1999. To date, that declaration has not been amended, and it constitutes the main basis of the extension granted to Argentina for the destruction of anti-personnel mines in mined areas in accordance with article 5.1 of the Convention.

The Malvinas Islands are the only part of Argentine territory that is affected by anti-personnel mines, but Argentina is prevented from gaining access to those mines in order to comply with its obligations under the Convention, given that the territory, together with the South Georgia Islands and South Sandwich Islands and the surrounding maritime areas, is illegally occupied by the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and is the subject of a sovereignty dispute.

Indeed, the General Assembly has recognized the existence of a dispute between the Argentine Republic and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and North Ireland concerning sovereignty over the Malvinas Islands, South Georgia Islands and South Sandwich Islands and the surrounding maritime areas, and has urged the two Governments to resume negotiations in order to find a peaceful and definitive solution to the dispute as soon as possible.

The Special Committee on decolonization has expressed the same opinion through the adoption every year of a resolution stating that the way to put an end to the dispute is through negotiations between the two parties. The most recent of these resolutions was adopted on 21 June 2018.

When making its extension request, on 1 October 2009, Argentina submitted a schematic plan for implementing article 5 of the Ottawa Convention in the disputed



areas over the 10 years of the extension, in the event that the negotiations on sovereignty between the Argentine Republic and the United Kingdom were to resume and, within this framework, both countries were to reach an agreement on the clearance of anti-personnel mines (including unexploded ordnance).

The Argentine Republic reaffirms its rights of sovereignty over the Malvinas Islands, South Georgia Islands and South Sandwich Islands and the surrounding maritime areas, which are an integral part of its national territory.

I should be grateful if you would have the present letter circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Alejandro Guillermo Verdier
Chargé d'affaires a.i.

**Security Council**

Distr.: General
6 July 2018

Original: English

**Letter dated 5 July 2018 from the Permanent Representative of
Turkey to the United Nations addressed to the President of the
Security Council**

I have the honour to transmit herewith a letter dated 5 July 2018, addressed to you by the Representative of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus, İsmet Korukoğlu (see annex).

I would be grateful if the present letter and its annex could be brought to the attention of the members of the Security Council and issued as a document of the Council.

(Signed) Feridun H. Sinirlioğlu
Permanent Representative



Annex to the letter dated 5 July 2018 from the Permanent Representative of Turkey to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

I have the honour to enclose herewith a copy of the letter dated 2 July 2018 addressed to you by the President of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus, Mustafa Akinci.

I would be grateful if the present letter and its enclosure could be circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) İsmet Korukoğlu
Representative

Enclosure

It has been brought to my attention that the Greek Cypriot Leader, Nikos Anastasiades, recently penned a letter dated 25 June 2018 addressed to the members of the United Nations Security Council regarding the renewal of the mandate of the United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus (UNFICYP). In response to certain allegations in the said letter, I deem it necessary to set the record straight and share with you the views and expectations of the Turkish Cypriot side regarding the matter at hand.

At the outset, it must be underlined that the Turkish Cypriot side has been cooperating with UNFICYP in a spirit of goodwill and cooperation, since its inception in 1964 in the face of the atrocities committed against the Turkish Cypriot community. Although the presence of UNFICYP has contributed to the stability on our island through its initial mandate after more than half a century of its operation in Cyprus, it is imperative for the United Nations Security Council to seriously reconsider and evaluate the mandate of this mission in the light of fundamental changes in the circumstances, such as the opening of crossing points between the two sides and the like.

Notwithstanding our cooperation and good relations, we shared in the past our views on the challenges and issues stemming from the operations of UNFICYP on our island. First and foremost, while it is stated in the "Brahimi report" (A/55/305-S/2000/809) that the consent of all local parties must be sought for a United Nations peacekeeping operation to be efficient and successful, UNFICYP continues to work with the Turkish Cypriot authorities without a legal basis, despite our repeated calls to establish one. I would like to take this opportunity to reiterate our readiness to conclude a document with the United Nations addressing all aspects of our relations with UNFICYP and setting the legal basis. Furthermore, contributions to the budget of UNFICYP by the Greek Cypriot administration and the Government of Greece, despite the fact that they are sides to the conflict in Cyprus, is a blatant example of conflict of interest and a practice which has been discontinued in all other United Nations missions in the world.

As also highlighted by the United Nations Secretary-General in all his recent reports, confidence-building and direct contact between the two communities on the island are vital for the success of efforts aimed at reaching a comprehensive settlement in Cyprus. The Turkish Cypriot side has shown its readiness to implement the already agreed confidence-building measures, as well as the projects aimed at increasing communication and cooperation between the two sides. However, the Greek Cypriot side managed to hinder or prevent any such attempts to create direct contacts between the two communities by deferring almost all bi-communal matters to UNFICYP. While acknowledging the role that UNFICYP played in the past to facilitate such contacts, I would like to remind the Security Council that there is nothing preventing the two sides from directly cooperating in all aspects, especially in crisis management and humanitarian issues, as long as the necessary political will exists. Taking into account the fact that one day there will be no presence of UNFICYP in Cyprus, direct cooperation should also be encouraged by the United Nations itself without any delay. Therefore, the presence of UNFICYP should not be exploited by the Greek Cypriot side as a pretext to create obstacles regarding direct dealings between the two sides. I expect the Members of the Security Council to take this into consideration in assessing the future of UNFICYP.

Since my election in 2015, I have worked hard to achieve further convergences and carry the negotiation process to a successful conclusion. Through my determined stance and the unprecedented steps taken by the Turkish Cypriot side in the

negotiation chapters, we managed to bring the process to its climax phase in June 2017 with the "Crans-Montana" round of the Cyprus Conference. During the Conference, the Turkish Cypriot side, together with Turkey, decisively showed the flexibility required to reach a strategic agreement, which would have paved the way for further convergences in the remaining outstanding issues that are necessary for a final deal and going to simultaneous referendums thereafter. However, instead of reciprocating the steps taken and showing the necessary political courage and determination, the Greek Cypriot leadership only focused on shifting the blame, and as a result, this unique window of opportunity to solve the Cyprus problem was missed. Despite this, as has been referred to in the latest report of the Secretary-General on progress towards a settlement in Cyprus (see S/2018/610, para. 13), I took yet another unprecedented initiative on 30 April 2018, which, unfortunately, was not accepted by the Greek Cypriot leader.

The reluctance of Mr. Anastasiades to take the necessary steps aimed at a solution raises the question of whether the Greek Cypriot leadership was ready for a solution based on a bizonal, bicomunal federation with political equality of the two sides in the first place. Unfortunately, rather than preparing his community for the compromise steps that are necessary for a settlement, as per the call of the United Nations Secretary-General in all his recent reports, the Greek Cypriot leadership continues to demonize political equality of the two sides and the principle of effective participation in decision-making. In order for the efforts aimed at reaching a just and viable solution to the Cyprus problem to succeed, there must be a mentality shift in the Greek Cypriot leadership, whereby they openly display their readiness to share power and prosperity and embrace the political equality of the two communities, which is a well-established United Nations parameter.

It must be remembered that the Turkish intervention took place as a legal response to the military coup d'état by Greece in Cyprus on 15 July 1974. In addition, systematic armed aggression against Turkish Cypriots since 1963 is also recorded in the United Nations archives. Therefore, Turkey's presence on the island should not be viewed as a means of aggression, but rather as a means to prevent aggression against Turkish Cypriots. In the face of these historical facts, rather than engaging in this kind of blame game, the Greek Cypriot leadership should focus on reaching a peaceful solution that will be mutually acceptable.

A similar mentality change is needed in the Greek Cypriot administration regarding how the hydrocarbons issue in Cyprus should be handled. In response to the allegations that Turkey has been the source of the escalation of tension in the Eastern Mediterranean, I would like to remind the Security Council of the repeated calls and proposals by the Turkish Cypriot side to establish a mechanism whereby the co-owners of the natural wealth around Cyprus, namely the Turkish Cypriots and Greek Cypriots, would jointly decide on the management and future exploitation of these resources. Turkey has also very strongly supported these proposals aiming at creating cooperation between the two sides on the island. Therefore, it is the intransigent stance of the Greek Cypriot administration in refusing to cooperate with the Turkish Cypriots which is the actual reason for the escalating tension in the Eastern Mediterranean region. Rather than continuing their unilateral steps in this sphere, which aim to exclude Turkish Cypriots and Turkey, I remain convinced that the interdependence and mutual benefit that would arise from inclusive regional partnerships would significantly contribute to peace and stability in our region and would also create a more conducive atmosphere for a solution in Cyprus.

In the light of the above, it is imperative for the Security Council to ensure that the presence of UNFICYP in Cyprus after 54 years does not contribute to the status quo and that it conforms to the changes in the situation on the ground. Therefore, a comprehensive review of the mandate, as well as the level and the concept of the

presence of UNFICYP on the island should not be out of the question, since, in my view, any presence that creates a comfort zone for the Greek Cypriot side in Cyprus must be challenged.

In closing, I wish to reiterate my strong commitment and political will to reach a comprehensive settlement in Cyprus.

I should be grateful if the present letter could be circulated as a document of the Security Council.

Mustafa Akinci
President

**Annex to the letter dated 6 July 2018 from the Chargé d'affaires
a.i. of the Permanent Mission of Namibia to the United Nations
addressed to the President of the Security Council**

Upon instructions from my authorities, I have the honour to write to you to bring to your attention and that of the Security Council the position of the Frente POLISARIO regarding the new mechanism established by the African Union aiming at substantively contributing to the completion of the decolonization process of our country, Western Sahara.

In its unanimous decision 653(XXIX) of 4 July 2017, the Assembly of the African Union requested the Chairpersons of the African Union and the African Union Commission, in consultation with the African Union Peace and Security Council, to take appropriate measures to support the United Nations efforts and encourage the parties, the Sahrawi Republic (SADR) and Morocco, both of whom are now members of the African Union, to cooperate in good faith towards ensuring the success of the new process.

It is to be recalled also that the African Union Assembly, in its decision 677(XXX) of 29 January 2018, expressed its support for the relaunching of the negotiation process between the Sahrawi Republic and Morocco with a view to reaching a durable solution consistent with the letter and spirit of the relevant Organization of African Unity (OAU)/African Union decisions and United Nations resolutions. The Assembly further requested Morocco to allow the African Union Observer Mission to return to Western Sahara as well as to allow an independent monitoring of human rights in the Territory.

In pursuance of the mandate entrusted to him by the aforementioned decisions, the Chairperson of the African Union Commission, Moussa Faki Mahamat, presented a report on the question of Western Sahara to the 31st Ordinary Session of the African Union Assembly of Heads of State and Government, held in Nouakchott, the sisterly Islamic Republic of Mauritania, on 1 and 2 July 2018, in which our President, Brahim Ghali, took part.

In his report, the Chairperson of the African Union Commission provided an account of his recent visit to the region, where he held meetings with the two parties, the Sahrawi and Moroccan respective authorities, and the neighbouring countries, as well as his interaction with the United Nations at various levels, including the Secretary-General and his Personal Envoy for Western Sahara. He also presented his recommendations regarding the way forward to resolve the conflict in Western Sahara.

Acting on the recommendations of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission, the 31st Ordinary Session of the African Union Assembly of Heads of State and Government took a decision in which it stressed the need for renewed efforts to overcome the current impasse in the negotiation process and to find "a just, lasting and mutually acceptable political solution, which will provide for the self-determination of the people of Western Sahara, in line with relevant AU decisions and UN Security Council resolutions".

To this end, it decided to establish an African Union mechanism comprising the African Union Troika and the Chairperson of the African Union Commission to extend effective support to the United Nations-led efforts. In this regard, the African Union also requested the Commission to initiate the required consultation for the reactivation of the African Union Office to the United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara (MINURSO) in Western Sahara in order to facilitate operational coordination with the United Nations.

The Sahrawi authorities welcome the unanimous historic decision of the African Union Assembly of Heads of State and Government to establish a special African mechanism dedicated to the question of Western Sahara. The decision indeed reflects the deep concern of the African Union regarding the unjustified delay in the decolonization of Western Sahara, a full-fledged State of the Union. It also represents a proactive initiative aimed at operationalizing the African Union commitment to contribute substantively to the search for a peaceful, just and lasting solution to the conflict between the Sahrawi Republic and the Kingdom of Morocco in line with the African Union Constitutive Act, as well as relevant OAU/African Union and United Nations resolutions.

The decision is also a significant step given Morocco's persistent defiance of African Union decisions and its incessant attempts to deliberately deny the African Union's indispensable role vis-à-vis the peace process in Africa's last colony, manifested, among other things, in Morocco's reluctance to allow the African Union Observer Mission to return to the Territory and resume its collaboration with MINURSO.

It is to be recalled that, as the successor to OAU, the African Union has remained strongly committed to the decolonization of Western Sahara, ever since OAU became actively engaged in reactivating the peace process in Western Sahara following the adoption of its resolution AHG/Res. 104 (XIX) of 1983. OAU resolution AHG/Res. 104 (XIX), which was endorsed by the General Assembly in 1984 and 1985, was instrumental in laying the foundations for all subsequent United Nations efforts aimed at finding a solution to the conflict.

The African Union is therefore acting regarding Western Sahara not only within the framework of its responsibilities for the promotion of peace, security and stability on the continent in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations and the African Union Constitutive Act, which establishes as a fundamental principle of the Union the "peaceful resolution of conflicts among Member States of the Union through such appropriate means as may be decided upon by the Assembly" (art. 4 (e)). The African Union also remains a full partner of the United Nations and guarantor of the implementation of the United Nations-OAU Settlement Plan of 1991, which was accepted by the two parties, the Frente POLISARIO and Morocco, and endorsed by the United Nations Security Council and General Assembly.

Furthermore, in discharging its responsibility for peace and security in Africa, the African Union cooperates very closely with the Security Council in all matters related to peace and security on the continent. It is in this context that the African Union has taken its decision to set an African mechanism dedicated to Western Sahara through which the African Union would make its indispensable and significant contribution to the peace process in Western Sahara.

The Sahrawi authorities therefore salute the strong commitment of the African Union to contributing substantively to the resolution of the conflict between the Sahrawi Republic and Morocco, and to ensuring compliance of its members with their obligations, and respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of all its member States, including SADR.

The Sahrawi authorities also reiterate their preparedness to engage in direct negotiations with Morocco, without preconditions and in good faith, as called for by Security Council resolutions and African Union decisions. In this regard, they reaffirm their strong commitment to cooperating fully with the efforts deployed by both the Secretary-General and his Personal Envoy for Western Sahara, Horst Köhler, and by the relevant African Union policy organs, including in particular the newly established mechanism, with a view to bringing about a speedy end to the decolonization process of Western Sahara.

I would be most grateful if you would bring the present letter to the attention of the members of the Security Council.

(Signed) Sidi M. Omar
Representative of the Frente POLISARIO
at the United Nations

**Security Council**

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Letter dated 5 July 2018 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the Security Council

I have the honour to refer to Security Council resolution 2372 (2017), in which the Council requested me to conduct a comprehensive assessment of the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM), working closely with the African Union and the Federal Government of Somalia. The review was aimed at taking stock of the transition of Somalia thus far and providing recommendations on the progressive transition from AMISOM to Somali security responsibility, including during the electoral period, taking into account the capacities of the Somali security forces.

Building on the recommendations of the special envoys of the African Union and the United Nations on AMISOM financing, the joint review mission took place from 10 to 19 May 2018. The mission was co-led by the United Nations Department of Peacekeeping Operations and the African Union Peace Support Operations Division, and included military, police, political, human rights and logistics experts from the Department of Political Affairs, the Department of Field Support, the United Nations Support Office in Somalia (UNSOS), the United Nations Assistance Mission in Somalia (UNSOM), the United Nations Office to the African Union, the African Union Commission and AMISOM. The European Union and States Members of the United Nations that are key security partners in Somalia also participated in the mission.

All AMISOM troop- and police-contributing countries were also represented and all AMISOM sector commanders, the acting Force Commander and the acting AMISOM Police Commissioner participated in the review, along with the Special Representative of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission for Somalia, Francisco Madeira.

Consultations, including on the transition plan for Somalia, were held with national actors such as the National Security Adviser, the Chief of the Defence Forces and other representatives from the Somali National Army, and with international partners in Mogadishu and Addis Ababa. The joint review mission also briefed the President of Somalia, Mohamed Abdullahi Mohamed Farmajo. Owing to ongoing and overlapping political developments, including a meeting of the Council of Interstate Cooperation, composed of the leaders of the federal member states of Somalia at the time of the joint review, the mission was unable to visit the federal member states.

The findings and recommendations of the joint review were considered by the Peace and Security Council of the African Union on 27 June 2018 at its 782nd meeting.



Main findings

Overall, Somalia has made significant progress over the past 10 years. AMISOM has been vital in this journey. It has been providing the security that has allowed the political process to unfold and enabled the United Nations and international partners to maintain their presence and to carry out their functions in support of peacebuilding and State-building in Somalia. AMISOM played an important role in securing the 2016 electoral process across Somalia, which enabled a peaceful transition of power to the current federal political dispensation under President Farmajo and Prime Minister Hassan Ali Khayre. AMISOM will also be a necessary partner in enabling the conduct of the next elections, envisioned for 2020–2021, in accordance with the political road map of Somalia.

Notwithstanding the considerable positive developments under the current Federal Government, including the agreement on the national security architecture of Somalia, progress is still reversible. Al-Shabaab remains a potent threat, demonstrating its continued ability to execute deadly terrorist attacks against civilians, Somali security forces and AMISOM. Continuing regional and clan divisions, coupled with the proliferation of arms in the country and the absence of the rule of law, also present chronic impediments to the prevention of violence and armed conflict. The small-scale but persistent presence of an armed group affiliated with Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) remains a major concern. The unresolved dispute between Somalia and “Somaliland” has escalated into conflict between Puntland and “Somaliland” in the disputed Sool region, claiming the lives of dozens of Somalis and displacing some 10,000 people in recent weeks.

Somalis are also facing new challenges. Internal political differences are being exacerbated by international rivalries that have resulted in contestation by proxy in Somalia. This, in turn, is impacting the fragile relations between the Federal Government of Somalia and its federal member states and sowing the seeds of deeper division among Somalis. Owing to such friction between the Federal Government and federal member states, progress with respect to federalism through, inter alia, formalizing the status of federal member states, agreeing on an electoral model and expediting the creation of a federated and integrated Somali security sector, has been limited. Furthermore, differences between the Federal Government, parliamentary blocs and opposition elements have exacerbated long-standing clan divisions over representation at the leadership level and have increased instability and the risk of violence.

In the absence of national reconciliation and a revised Constitution defining a final political settlement and the principles of a federal State, the strategic location of Somalia and its rising geopolitical importance render it increasingly vulnerable to external influence and interference. This is a grave situation that underscores the pressing need for agreement among the country’s leaders on key issues such as power- and resource-sharing and detailed security arrangements.

On the economic front, Somalia has made progress on the path towards the clearance of arrears and in implementing fiscal reforms that would enable it to attract grants and to regain access to financing from international financial institutions. Efforts by the Federal Government to increase revenue generation are bearing fruit, improving the prospects for Somalia being able to financially sustain its own security sector in the future. However, despite significant investment by the international community and the commendable achievements, notably by the Danab special forces and by security services in Jubbaland and Puntland, Somali security forces in the AMISOM area of operations largely lack the capacity, structures, institutional oversight and support to be able to take over security responsibility. Security infrastructure will have to be built with support from the international community and

then sustained progressively by the Federal Government. Success in building trust between the Federal Government and federal member states, as well as with the public, will be critical to making progress. Without that trust, the investment in Somali security capacity will not be firmly grounded. AMISOM remains indispensable to providing security and creating the necessary space for the political process to unfold, until Somali security institutions can shoulder that responsibility.

The transition plan for Somalia presents a real opportunity to consolidate all lines of activity related to military and police operations, institutional capacity-building and stabilization in a holistic effort under Somali ownership. There is, however, a significant lack of capacity and resources to adequately implement the plan's priorities and to improve the alignment between civilian and military leadership, between the Federal Government and federal member states, and among international partners that provide financial and capacity-building support.

The joint review determined that AMISOM had a continuing role to play in carrying out the priority tasks set out in resolution 2372 (2017) in all sectors, which are critical to achieving the strategic objectives of enabling the gradual handover of security responsibilities to Somali security forces, reducing the threat posed by Al-Shabaab and other armed opposition groups, and assisting Somali security forces in providing security for the political process, stabilization, reconciliation and peacebuilding.

As for the holding of elections in 2020–2021, the presence of AMISOM, alongside Somali security forces, will also be necessary, with the latter expected to have attained sufficient capacity to play a lead role in providing security for the elections.

The civilian component of AMISOM has made an important contribution in support of the political process, alongside its other civilian functions with respect to humanitarian support, civil affairs and human rights. AMISOM has closely collaborated with UNSOM (as the lead entity in supporting the political process), the Intergovernmental Authority on Development and relevant Member States. The African Union Commission will undertake an assessment of the civilian component of AMISOM that will map the current deployment of AMISOM civilians and identify the added value that AMISOM can bring in support of the political process, including with respect to the need for a presence in key areas to complement that of UNSOM.

Developments since the previous joint review and resolution 2372 (2017)

On the basis of the desire of the Federal Government of Somalia to assume security responsibilities from AMISOM, albeit gradually and through a conditions-based handover, resolution 2372 (2017) reflects the intent of the Security Council to seek an exit strategy for AMISOM after 10 years of deployment. The resolution marked a shift in strategic focus from AMISOM to the building of Somali forces, with a view to transitioning security responsibility from the former to the latter. The resolution therefore presented the Federal Government and federal member states with the task of setting out their priorities for the transition, in consultation with AMISOM and its troop- and police-contributing countries and with international partners. In this manner, AMISOM and donors can align their efforts to support these agreed priorities and ensure a sustainable handover.

However, the real capacity of Somali security forces was not known, and, at the time of the joint review in 2017, the plans for transition were not realistic. Notwithstanding the development and execution of a Somali-owned Mogadishu stabilization plan, Somalia suffered the worst terrorist attack in its history, on 14 October 2017 in Mogadishu, which claimed over 500 lives and left many more injured. The attack, attributed to Al-Shabaab, underscored the deficiencies in capacity

and command and control of Somali security forces. It was followed by other deadly attacks by Al-Shabaab on civilian and military targets in Mogadishu and other parts of the country. These attacks clearly demonstrate that a premature handover would be risky and that the continued presence of AMISOM is necessary during the transition as Somalia builds the capability of its security forces and institutions and prepares for elections in 2020–2021.

In order to assess the baseline capacity of Somali security forces, and in response to the Council's request in resolution 2372 (2017) to that effect, the Federal Government, with the participation of AMISOM, the United Nations and international partners, led an operational readiness assessment of the Somali National Army in 2018. The assessment concluded that, as currently manned, trained and equipped, the Somali National Army is a fragile force with extremely weak command and control and military capabilities. Despite multiple training processes in recent years, the Somali National Army lacks a common doctrine and training standards; is extremely poorly equipped and not sustained; and has little to no infrastructure, including medical services at the battalion and brigade levels. In many areas, the Somali National Army is static and wholly defensive in nature, limited to occupying ground, and without the ability to hold newly recovered areas or prevent Al-Shabaab from retaking territory. On 29 May 2018, the Chief of the Defence Forces of Somalia endorsed the assessment findings in a memorandum to the President, Prime Minister and Minister of Defence.

Although progress is being made in the implementation of the country's new policing model, an operational readiness assessment determined that the Somali police force was almost entirely stationed in Mogadishu, and it also revealed serious gaps with regard to human resources, infrastructure, equipment and logistics. Many of the officers have reached retirement age, and several units are not operational. The assessment did not cover the emerging State police services or the regional forces that are to be integrated into the Darwish militarized police.

An additional operational readiness assessment of regional forces in the federal member states is ongoing and expected to be completed by the end of 2018. The national security architecture stipulates that regional forces should be integrated into the Somali national army or be absorbed into the Darwish, in accordance with authorized numbers. In February 2018, the National Security Council agreed that the Federal Government would provide wide-ranging support to the federal member state police services, including the Darwish, which were conducting operations against Al-Shabaab in conjunction with the Somali national army. Progress in that regard has been very limited.

Meanwhile, in line with resolution 2372 (2017), by 31 December 2017, AMISOM had reduced military personnel by 1,000 and made progress in generating an additional 500 police personnel towards the total authorized number of 1,040. At present, 718 AMISOM police personnel are deployed, including three of the five authorized formed police units, each with an augmented strength of 160 personnel. Pursuant to resolution 2372 (2017), the number of military personnel is to be further reduced by 1,000 by 30 October 2018.

Transition plan

Following the security conference held in Mogadishu on 4 December 2017 to take stock of progress and challenges in the implementation of the national security architecture, the Federal Government, in close partnership with federal member states, led the development of a transition plan for Somalia. Representatives of the federal member states, AMISOM, troop- and police-contributing countries, the

United Nations and other international partners participated in the development of the plan.

The transition plan provides a strategic framework for the gradual handover of security responsibility from AMISOM to Somali security institutions in three phases over the next four years, until December 2021. It outlines key priorities, milestones, indicators and conditions for the transition under a Somali (both federal and sub-federal) vision for security. In line with the agreement among all stakeholders that the plan should be comprehensive, it is organized into: (a) operational activities, including the identification and prioritization of locations where Somali security institutions would progressively assume full security responsibility, including through the deployment of forces recognized in the national security architecture; (b) institutional capacity-building, entailing the implementation of plans and programmes for that purpose, including the national security architecture, recommendations from the operational readiness assessments, and policing, justice and civil service reform; and (c) supporting activities, which involve the alignment of non-security efforts to create the conditions for a sustainable peace, including through stabilization, strengthening local governance and the rule of law, reconciliation, mediation, socioeconomic activities and activities aimed at preventing and countering violent extremism.

The transition plan has incorporated the views of the federal member states and other security stakeholders, including regional security council representatives, the Somali national army, AMISOM troop- and police-contributing countries in the sectors, AMISOM police and international partners. The transition plan was presented by the National Security Adviser and endorsed at the 769th meeting of the Peace and Security Council on 30 April 2018, and subsequently presented and endorsed at a high-level meeting of the international community on security in Brussels, Belgium, on 2 May 2018, which also provided a platform for the Federal Government to highlight the key objectives of the first phase of the plan, which extends to mid-2019. The plan was approved by the National Security Council in its meetings held on 3 and 4 June 2018 in Baidoa. Three priority areas have been agreed for the initial stage of implementation: (a) the stadium in Mogadishu; (b) the town of Leego, in South-West State; and (c) the road between Mogadishu and Baidoa.

During the joint review mission, AMISOM, troop- and police-contributing countries and key security partners expressed their full support for the transition plan. All stakeholders agreed that the transition plan provided a vision and strategic direction for the process by which a gradual handover of security responsibility from AMISOM to Somali security institutions could take place. Detailed operational planning and implementation efforts were under way, requiring the alignment of efforts by the Federal Government, federal member states, AMISOM military and police components, troop- and police-contributing countries and international partners, under a holistic approach that encompassed military, police, support, stabilization, the rule of law and non-security elements under the three aspects of the transition plan. To that end, the joint review recommended that coordination between military operations and stabilization-related efforts continue to be enhanced with a focus on policing, rule of law, justice, including courts, prosecution offices and corrections facilities, mechanisms to protect human rights and the provision of basic services to the population. It was agreed during the joint review that existing coordination structures under the comprehensive approach to security should be fully utilized by AMISOM, troop- and police-contributing countries and other partners. All actors should be guided by existing Somali federal and State frameworks on transition, stabilization and reconciliation.

The implementation of the transition plan in the three priority areas in the pilot stage is an opportunity to test the effectiveness of the holistic approach to the

transition and to create a template for future locations and operations. It is also important that progress continue to be made with respect to other tasks and priorities of the first phase of the transition plan, in parallel with the planning and implementation of the plan in the three priority locations.

On the basis of consultations on the transition plan, including the role of AMISOM, the joint review determined that the implementation of the transition plan should be constantly informed by the evolving situation on the ground, with the participation and agreement of major stakeholders. Specifically, implementation should be carried out in a flexible manner, adjusted to specific locations and situations, with due consideration given to progress made in stabilization activities and to the political situation in a given context. Future priorities should be decided in consultation with AMISOM prior to their adoption, and each of the tasks under the detailed plans require realistic costs assessments and a framework for resourcing. Updates on the implementation of the plan in the priority areas during the first phase, including costing, will be presented at the Somalia partnership forum to be held in Brussels on 16 and 17 July 2018.

Recommendations for the reconfiguration of AMISOM

In its resolution 2372 (2017), the Security Council envisioned AMISOM shifting towards a support role and Somali security forces progressively assuming responsibility for security. This continues to be the case, alongside the priority tasks that are already part of the AMISOM mandate. With the development of the transition plan and considering the AMISOM transformation proposed by the special envoys of the African Union and the United Nations, the shift will require AMISOM to reconfigure itself to align its strategic objectives, presence and mandated tasks with the implementation of the transition plan, starting with the three priority locations in the pilot stage. The joint review examined what the proposed reconfiguration of AMISOM would entail with respect to its police, military, support and civilian functions. The findings of the joint review and the recommendations for each of those areas should inform a revised AMISOM concept of operations.

The reconfiguration of AMISOM would strengthen the capabilities of AMISOM force headquarters and improve cohesion and coordination among AMISOM troop- and police-contributing countries, as well as among AMISOM, Somalis and bilateral partners. The reconfiguration should aim to ensure that troop- and police-contributing countries work together in a coordinated manner to achieve a unified operational objective. In that regard, the possibility of multiple troop- and police-contributing countries being active in a sector, instead of individual troop- and police-contributing countries operating largely independently in their own sectors, could be examined in the AMISOM concept of operations. The reconfiguration should transform AMISOM into a more nimble, dynamic and integrated mission that is better coordinated with all partners and Somalis. Implementation of the transition plan in two of the three priority locations in the first phase, namely, Leego and the Mogadishu-Baidoa main supply route, involve, for the first time, two AMISOM sectors (sectors 1 and 3) and two political entities (the Federal Government and South-West State). This presents an opportunity for AMISOM troop- and police-contributing countries on one hand, and Somali authorities on the other, to demonstrate their capacity for collaboration and coordination in planning and implementation.

With respect to the reconfiguration, it was recommended that, first, a coordination platform, such as a joint operations cell or "fusion cell", be established at AMISOM force headquarters. That platform, with the participation of ranked liaison officers from each sector, supported by force headquarters staff and external experts, would be mandated to provide the AMISOM Force Commander with daily operational information from all sectors and intelligence gathered by international

partners, together with analysis of the combined picture. The platform would complement the strategic oversight mechanisms of the African Union and would strengthen planning and coordination among AMISOM troop- and police-contributing countries under the authority of the Force Commander. Funding options for the international experts include seconding Member States bearing the costs for their deployment or voluntary contributions through the AMISOM trust fund administered by UNSOS.

Second, it was proposed that the military mentoring and assistance role of AMISOM be expanded into a more robust combat mentoring role. Trained Somali national army units and Somali security forces identified to take part in specific joint operations should be gathered and mentored for combat readiness before commencing operations, including through joint exercises within AMISOM-secured areas. Doing so would facilitate coordination, cooperation, and de-confliction between the Somali national army, Somali security forces and AMISOM, especially in areas where responsibility is being transferred to Somali authorities.

Third, following the positive results of the pilot project undertaken in Kismaayo and Baidoa to train the Somali police, it was recommended that the Security Council give AMISOM a police training role. AMISOM should expand its training activities, as foreseen under the United Nations-AMISOM joint police programme, launched in June 2018, and in line with the new policing model and police plans of federal member states that have already been approved by the National Security Council. In support of the implementation of the first phase of the transition plan, the training and mentoring activities of the AMISOM police component should be expanded with a view to extending the Somali police presence to locations along the Mogadishu-Baidoa route. The joint police programme should take into account projects that are required to implement the transition plan, while maintaining the implementation of the country's new policing model as its primary focus. The AMISOM police component should participate fully in existing coordination mechanisms. The African Union Commission should expedite the generation and deployment of the two formed police units needed to reach the total number of police personnel that has been authorized. The United Nations, through its Police Division, stands ready to provide the required support, including by facilitating the training of identified units.

Fourth, the AMISOM reconfiguration requires that a comprehensive assessment of the capacities and readiness of AMISOM be conducted jointly by the African Union and the United Nations, with support from international partners, at the earliest opportunity. The operational readiness assessment of AMISOM, together with those of the Somali security entities that have been conducted or that are under way, would present a complete picture of the capacities of all security actors in Somalia. It would provide the baseline for the AMISOM statement of unit requirements to inform the reconfiguration and the determination of how to best support the transition and would serve to increase transparency and donor confidence. The findings of the operational readiness assessment should feed into the development of a revised concept of operations and the technical review proposed below, on the basis of which the provision of key enablers, such as appropriate aviation assets, could be actively examined and pursued to, inter alia, form the core element of a possible quick reaction force under the Force Commander.

In parallel with supporting the implementation of the transition plan in the pilot locations, AMISOM should continue its priority tasks and activities in the implementation of its mandate in all sectors. That includes the further detailing of the conditions that should be created by the end of the first phase and determining appropriate modalities to achieve those conditions. In that regard, and as recommended pursuant to the joint review, AMISOM sector 6, which covers an unspecified area around Kismaayo, in Jubbaland, is expected to be closed and

subsumed into sector 2. The Jubbaland state forces in Kismaayo town are among the most capable in Somalia, and the activities of the AMISOM contingent in sector 6, which consists of approximately 1,600 troops, are limited. Decommissioning sector 6 may also provide flexibility for future troop reconfigurations and reductions and the reallocation of logistical support.

The AMISOM reconfiguration process should begin with the joint AMISOM operational readiness assessment, followed by a blueprint for the reconfiguration created under the responsibility of the Force Commander and sector commanders, to be agreed with the Somalis and endorsed by the Peace and Security Council. The planning and endorsement of the reconfiguration is expected to be completed by January 2019, at the time of the technical review, with implementation likely to continue until mid-2019. The entire reconfiguration exercise in support of the transition plan is expected to be completed in approximately 12 months.

Support implications for the African Union Mission in Somalia and Somali security forces

The joint review found continuing gaps in logistics, equipment and funding for the primary security actors in Somalia, namely, AMISOM military and police components, the Somali national army and Somali police services, and concluded that the implementation of the first phase of the transition plan, while simultaneously conducting military operations and mandated tasks in all other sectors, might require additional resources to meet support requirements. The joint review confirmed the need for force enablers and force multipliers to support efforts to conduct concurrent operations, both in the context of the transition plan and in wider sector operations. The comprehensive AMISOM operational readiness assessment, as proposed above, will provide an accurate understanding of AMISOM capacities and needs, including force enablers and force multipliers, and serve as the basis for further specifying AMISOM support requirements.

A working group established by the United Nations and the African Union to develop a concept of operations for AMISOM aviation and intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance assets, on the basis of the broader strategic concept of operations, will also contribute to clarity on aviation and intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance requirements to support concurrent tasks.

Once that is completed, the generation of the identified capacities will need to be expedited by the African Union and the United Nations. The deployment of those assets will necessitate a thorough risk assessment and related mitigation measures, as outlined in the human rights due diligence policy on United Nations support to non-United Nations security forces.

The full capacity of the Somali security forces to deploy and assume security responsibilities in the first phase of the transition plan is not yet known, as the Somali authorities are in the process of identifying capable Somali national army and regional forces for this purpose. Support requirements for Somali security forces, including regional forces, will become clearer as the transition gets under way.

A system of logistical support for Somali forces during the first phase is required to facilitate a sustainable handover, in the light of an impending withdrawal of support in locations where AMISOM is no longer present, which could deter Somali forces from assuming full responsibility. The joint review highlighted the need to establish the support requirements for Somali security forces, including police and regional forces, and to develop viable options for how those could be addressed. That support should include the 2,400 Puntland troops that have been integrated into the Somali national army, provided that they are dedicated for use in operations against Al-Shabaab, ISIL-affiliated groups and piracy. In addition, Somali security forces

need to have enhanced capacity to deal with improvised explosive devices, which pose a major threat to their security.

UNSOS support should eventually be adjusted in line with emerging demands during the AMISOM reconfiguration and the transition process. Following an assessment of the support requirements of Somali security forces and an analysis to determine who is best placed on the basis of comparative advantage to deliver that support, the UNSOS mandate with respect to the provision of support to AMISOM and the Somali national army could be adjusted to reflect the operational requirements in the first phase of the transition plan.

Accountability and compliance

The joint review assessed progress in implementing the recommendations set out in the matrix annexed to my letter to the Security Council on the findings and recommendations of the 2017 joint review, which were aimed at strengthening mechanisms and measures to better prevent and address human rights and international humanitarian law violations by AMISOM.

Progress has been achieved in implementing some of the recommendations, which include the translation and dissemination of AMISOM rules of engagement in accordance with international human rights and humanitarian law; in-mission training for troops and specific training for staff, including on accountability, led by the African Union; the development of an African Union-United Nations predeployment manual to facilitate the delivery of predeployment training by troop- and police-contributing countries after the transfer of that responsibility to them; the development of African Union-wide policy guidelines on conduct and discipline; and the allocation of \$200,000 by the African Union to facilitate ex gratia payments or amends for harm to civilians allegedly caused by AMISOM in 2018.

Nevertheless, gaps remain in addressing cases of alleged violations by AMISOM, including in respect of feedback and the exchange of information on the findings of the investigations into those allegations. Other gaps include delayed responses to allegations, sometimes caused by delayed feedback from the sectors; differences in the methodologies used by the UNSOM human rights team and the AMISOM human rights unit, leading to discrepancies in figures; unsustainable or inadequate funding to fully operationalize ex gratia payments to victims of harm caused by AMISOM troops; and the inability of AMISOM to follow up on cases in the field owing to there being a limited number of human rights officers to monitor and report on human rights issues in the six AMISOM sectors. Additional consultations between AMISOM and the United Nations on how to address such challenges are necessary to improve results.

The joint review recommended a process to further agree on modalities to enhance coordination of and support for investigations, including an assessment of how agreed recommendations on that issue from the previous joint review could be implemented. The matrix for recommendations on measures should therefore continue to be used as a tool to monitor and report on compliance and the implementation of the measures.

In the context of the transition, with anticipated joint operations including or involving the use of regional forces, the risk of violations of human rights and international humanitarian law is likely to increase. AMISOM compliance measures need to be stepped up alongside measures for Somali security forces, in particular those linked to identification (including numbers, locations and minimum vetting), command and control and internal oversight, measures to avoid the use of children, measures to prevent the perpetration of sexual exploitation and abuse, and timely responses to allegations, including through investigations.

There is a need to strengthen coordination including through the United Nations-AMISOM/United Nations joint working group on human rights due diligence policy and joint engagement with Somali security forces to ensure accountability and respect for international human rights, humanitarian and refugee law. The application of the human rights due diligence policy remains pivotal. Effectively preventing and addressing violations by AMISOM in the context of its operations will contribute to enhancing the likelihood of meeting its security objectives.

Implications for the mandate of the African Union Mission in Somalia

While the strategic objectives and priority tasks for AMISOM should remain largely as set out in resolution 2372 (2017), they should now be aligned with the transition plan. AMISOM should continue its core tasks, with adjustments as outlined in the present letter, including: (a) protecting main population centres, including the presence of international actors, securing and enabling political and reconciliation processes, the maintenance of law and order, public safety and early recovery, in close coordination with Somali security forces, while implementing the transfer of responsibility to Somali security forces and institutions in accordance with the transition plan; (b) contributing effectively to securing main supply routes, beginning with the Mogadishu-Baidoa route; (c) conducting targeted joint operations with Somali security forces to further degrade Al-Shabaab and other armed opposition groups, with progressively increasing Somali participation and with appropriate mitigation measures in place, including with regard to minimizing the threat posed by improvised explosive devices; (d) mentoring Somali national army units involved in joint operations in combat readiness, including through joint exercises prior to the conduct of operations; and (e) contributing to the training and deployment of the Somali police, in close collaboration with UNSOM, and in line with the national security architecture, the new policing model and State police plans.

The coming months will be critical in assessing progress in the implementation of the first phase of the transition plan and its three pilot priorities, as well as progress in the reconfiguration of AMISOM. With the aim of enabling an effective AMISOM reconfiguration in support of the transition plan at this early stage, I support the joint review's recommendation that the Security Council extend the AMISOM mandate for one year.

The joint review recommended that a technical review be conducted in January 2019 to assess the state and effectiveness of the AMISOM reconfiguration in support of the transition, and, on that basis, recommend how the next 1,000-person reduction in AMISOM military personnel, mandated by the Security Council to take place by 30 October 2018, should be implemented.

It was recommended that the reduction be postponed to February 2019 to better enable AMISOM to complete the planning and initiate the execution of its reconfiguration in support of the handover of responsibility for the three priority areas in the first phase of the transition plan. Doing so would allow for proper planning on the basis of the AMISOM operational readiness assessment, the development of a concept of operations and the implementation of the pilot stage of the transition plan. It would also avoid reductions that are not aligned with the AMISOM reconfiguration and support to the transition, including untimely reductions in active sectors.

If agreed by the Security Council, the proposed technical review would evaluate progress and the effectiveness of AMISOM reconfiguration and positioning in support of the transition, on the basis of the criteria set out in the present letter, focusing, in particular, on measures to improve coordination and collaboration among AMISOM, its troop- and police-contributing countries, Somalis and international partners. It would also review progress in the operations being carried out pursuant to the first

phase of the transition plan and assess the pace of the plan's implementation, including by providing an updated understanding of the state and readiness of Somali security forces and their integration in accordance with the national security architecture. In the light of its findings, the review would aim to provide observations on the trajectory of future reductions in AMISOM uniformed personnel. The technical review would be conducted by the United Nations and the African Union, in close collaboration with the transition plan implementation team, and its report would be shared informally with the team and all interested partners. The report could also be discussed in an informal interactive dialogue with the Council in February.

Observations

I would like to thank the African Union Commission for the strong collaboration with the United Nations in carrying out the fourth joint review of AMISOM. The participation of the Somali authorities in the review for the second time is equally commendable and is a positive indication that, despite continuing challenges, Somalia is on the path towards taking full responsibility for its security. I would also like to thank members of the Security Council and the European Union for their participation and engagement in the joint review mission. I commend AMISOM, UNSOM, UNSOS and the United Nations Office to the African Union for facilitating the joint review exercise and for their steadfast efforts to enhance collaboration among the security partners of Somalia. I endorse the recommendations of the joint review as outlined above and urge the Council to consider them positively.

I wish to highlight the presence in the joint review mission of the Special Representative of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission for Somalia and representatives of AMISOM troop- and police-contributing countries, along with the participation of the acting AMISOM Force Commander, the acting AMISOM Police Commissioner and all sector commanders. Their participation enhanced the inclusivity of the exercise and the credibility of its outcomes. I encourage AMISOM and its troop- and police-contributing countries to continue to carry out the priority tasks towards achieving its strategic objectives, as set out by the Security Council, and to implement the necessary transformation of AMISOM on the basis of the outcomes of the joint review, thereby demonstrating full commitment to the Somali transition.

Somalia faces a complex combination of new and old threats to its stability and progress. Recurring humanitarian crises such as ongoing floods add to the suffering of the Somali people, who continue to demonstrate exemplary resilience in the face of formidable challenges. Alongside the threat of Al-Shabaab, its affiliates and other non-State armed groups, continuing differences between the Federal Government and federal member states, exacerbated by external influence and interference, are major obstacles to the formation of a functioning federal State. I urge the leaders of Somalia to put aside their differences and forge the necessary agreements, under a common vision, to build a functioning federal State for all Somalis. The people of Somalia, already among the poorest and more vulnerable in the world, must not pay the price arising from a failure to strengthen political unity.

At the same time, the international community should redouble its efforts to shield Somalia from the impact of external rivalries that threaten to reverse the gains achieved so far. I urge the Security Council, the African Union, including its Peace and Security Council, and Member States to examine ways and exert the effort necessary to protect Somalia from further division.

I welcome the development of the transition plan as an important sign of the commitment of the Federal Government of Somalia and its federal member states towards taking ownership and responsibility for security. As the leaders of Somalia

continue on the path towards resolving key questions in relation to federalism, which is to be enshrined in a permanent Constitution, political differences should not be allowed to prevent the implementation of the transition plan and the establishment of an effective and accountable security sector that is capable of gradually assuming responsibility from AMISOM. Federal and sub-federal line ministries and security institutions must continue to work together closely to realize the national security architecture, including by accelerating the integration of regional forces into national and State security institutions, in accordance with human rights standards. All efforts should be made to ensure Somali ownership and unity of purpose at the federal and State levels, as well as wider buy-in across Somali society, for the successful implementation of the transition plan.

Equally, the implementation of the transition plan will not be possible without the full participation, coordination and support of AMISOM and its troop- and police-contributing countries, as well as key security partners. I welcome the commitment to the transition plan expressed by AMISOM, troop- and police-contributing countries and partners during the joint review, and encourage them to continue this spirit of engagement in the detailed planning and operationalization of the plan through existing mechanisms, as part of a comprehensive approach to security. Implementation of the first phase and its pilot priorities will be a test case for the AMISOM-Somali security institutions nexus and should be fully supported. Lessons learned from the early stage should be used to adapt the transition effort, thereby enhancing its credibility and prospects.

Given the existing gaps in their current state of readiness, most Somali national army units outside Mogadishu cannot assume responsibilities from AMISOM forces. They lack the collective military capability to conduct effective offensive operations on their own, being unable to independently sustain themselves, and require significant investment if they are to become a legitimate force in Somalia. I commend the efforts of the Federal Government to draw a clear and transparent picture of the status of the Somali national army, which greatly assisted in further transition planning. The endorsement by the Chief of the Defence Forces of the findings of the operational readiness assessment of the Somali national army is an important step prior to the finalization of the joint review's findings and recommendations.

In that regard, I commend the integration of 2,400 Puntland force personnel into the Somali national army, and urge Somali authorities to expedite the identification and integration of regional forces in other federal member states into the Somali security forces, in accordance with the national security architecture and the agreements of the National Security Council. I also encourage the Somali authorities to complete the operational readiness assessment of regional forces, which would provide a better understanding of their readiness to conduct joint operations, and to conduct continuous assessments of Somali security forces as they reorganize in support of the transition.

I urge the international partners of Somalia, as signatories to the security pact agreed in London in May 2017, in recognition and support of the country's efforts to assume responsibility for its own security, to step forward and provide the support and resources needed for the successful implementation of the transition plan. At the same time, I urge the Federal Government and federal member states to recognize that progress in taking the political decisions needed for essential reforms, and concrete steps towards the implementation of the transition plan, will be critical to the availability of resources.

I reiterate my call for predictable and sustainable funding for AMISOM, and refer to the report of the special envoys on AMISOM financing, submitted to the Security Council on 19 April 2018, which makes a strong case for continued

predictable financing for AMISOM as it adapts in support of the country's transformation. The joint review has provided the parameters for that transformation through the proposed AMISOM reconfiguration, for which financial support will be critical.

On the whole, I am encouraged by the steps being taken towards a gradual, conditions-based handover of security to Somali security forces and institutions. I commend AMISOM for successfully completing its first drawdown of 1,000 military personnel in December 2017 and urge AMISOM to complete the generation of the remaining additional police personnel that have been authorized. Over the next several months, AMISOM and Somali security forces will undertake operations and tasks necessary to implement the first phase of the transition in the three priority locations. This will be a critical period that will test both the credibility of the transition plan and the effectiveness of AMISOM support to the plan. AMISOM should be afforded the time to complete its reconfiguration, with an extension of the timeline for further reductions in its uniformed personnel. The proposed reconfiguration would not only enable AMISOM to more effectively deliver on its mandate in support of the Somali transition, but it would also improve the prospects for sustainable reductions in uniformed personnel as a result of the creation of a more efficient and transformed AMISOM, in line with a conditions-based transition.

In this overall context, assurances on issues related to accountability in the use of resources underpin any enhanced United Nations support, and the human rights due diligence policy remains the cornerstone of such support either to AMISOM by virtue of its reconfiguration, or to Somali security forces.

I take note of the intention of the African Union Commission to conduct a review of the AMISOM civilian component. I consider that, pursuant to resolution 2372 (2017), the focus should remain on tasks that enable the delivery on the core mandate of AMISOM, including political engagement with respect to all aspects of mandate delivery. The complementarity of mandates and close collaboration at all levels should drive the work of AMISOM civilians and UNSOM.

I pay tribute and reiterate my deep gratitude to the brave men and women of AMISOM and to the Somali security forces, whose courage and sacrifices give hope to millions of Somalis in their quest for a durable peace and a future free from armed conflict.

I also express my appreciation for the work of the leaders and participants in the joint review. I am aware of the challenges that they faced and the proud manner in which they sought to resolve them.

I would be grateful if you could bring the present letter to the attention of the members of the Security Council.

(Signed) António Guterres

**Security Council**

Distr.: General
9 July 2018

Original: English

**Letter dated 6 July 2018 from the Permanent Representative of
the United Arab Emirates to the United Nations addressed to the
President of the Security Council**

I have the honour to refer to my letter to the President of the Security Council dated 19 June 2018 (S/2018/618), transmitting a letter from Reem Al Hashimy, Cabinet member and Minister of State for International Cooperation. Upon instructions from my Government, I am pleased to transmit herewith an update from Ms. Al Hashimy regarding the humanitarian situation in Hudaydah, Yemen (see annex).

I should be grateful if you would arrange for the present letter and its annex to be circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Lana Nusselbeh
Ambassador
Permanent Representative



Annex to the letter dated 6 July 2018 from the Permanent Representative of the United Arab Emirates to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

6 July 2018

Further to my letter dated 19 June 2018 (S/2018/618), on behalf of my Government, I am writing to provide an update on the humanitarian situation in Yemen, in particular in Hudaydah. I would also like to share further details on the contingency plan I had referred to in that letter for a humanitarian response by the Arab Coalition to Support Legitimacy in Yemen (the Coalition).

At the outset, let me reaffirm the Coalition's commitment to international humanitarian law and its humanitarian commitment to the people of Yemen, regardless of their location and affiliation.

The Coalition is acutely aware of the scale and gravity of the humanitarian crisis that Yemen faces. The situation in Hudaydah must be considered in the context of the broader humanitarian situation in Yemen, as Hudaydah and its port form a critical part of the country's humanitarian infrastructure. Yemen's already challenging development situation rapidly deteriorated when, nearly four years ago, Houthi militias began attacking and taking over large swaths of the country. The State institutions they seized were rendered incapable of delivering basic services, and members of the Houthi militias have enriched themselves by profiteering in the range of billions of dollars from the sale of black market fuel and the imposition of illegal taxation mechanisms and by monopolizing key sectors of the economy at the expense of Yemen's private sector and civilians, many of whom have closed their businesses and left the country.

The United Nations and other partners have worked tirelessly to foster a viable plan for peace and political transition, inclusive of the Houthis and compliant with Security Council resolution 2216 (2015). Progress, however, has been marginal to date. There is a consistent pattern of the Houthis agreeing to terms in support of the peace process and then reneging. Concurrently, the Houthis continue to fire ballistic missiles into the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (more than 150 so far), threatening the lives of civilians and undermining the prospects for a peaceful resolution to the conflict. Their practice of laying vast numbers of landmines and improvised explosive devices will be a deadly legacy for decades to come — analysts estimate that the Houthis have turned Yemen into the most heavily mined country in the Middle East and North Africa. They also continue their well-documented recruitment and use of children on the battlefield, with devastating short- and long-term impacts. Moreover, they continue to refuse to make commitments to international humanitarian law and international law, instead, in public speeches as recently as two weeks ago, promising a scorched-earth approach to Hudaydah. There are also a worrying number of reports from the United Nations, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and Coalition monitors on the ground in Hudaydah about Houthi actions against key infrastructure and civilian safety that are already having an impact and threatening to intensify humanitarian risks. Some of these reported actions constitute *prima facie* violations of the Houthis' obligations under international humanitarian law. Of particular note, the Houthis have been documented indiscriminately placing landmines and improvised explosive devices in and around Hudaydah. The Houthis are also positioning combatants, heavy weapons and snipers in residential areas and schools and opening fire from these locations. The United Nations has reported that the Houthis have dug trenches in Hudaydah, damaging water and sanitation systems, which increases the risk of an outbreak of cholera. Troublingly, some civilians are also reporting Houthi interference in their efforts to leave areas controlled by Houthi

militias. Last week, Houthi militias raided a World Food Programme (WFP) warehouse and detained two WFP workers. These actions clearly imperil the lives of civilians and demonstrate a contemptuous disregard for international law. The Coalition has carefully calibrated its operation to liberate Hudaydah to account for this complex humanitarian setting, avoid civilian impacts and preserve and protect vital humanitarian infrastructure, including Hudaydah port.

The Coalition reiterates its continued support for the efforts of the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for Yemen, Martin Griffiths. Accordingly, the Coalition has consistently given the Special Envoy time to reach a political solution. That said, and given the recent evidence of the Houthis' behaviour in Hudaydah, the Coalition is concerned that the Houthis perceive a link between leverage in political negotiations and a worsening of the humanitarian and civilian safety situation. The Houthis have made no assurances, either about the preservation of the port or about any intention on their part to uphold international humanitarian law and civilian safety. Accordingly, it is critical that the international community condemn Houthi violations in the clearest and strongest terms. Pressure by the Security Council in this regard would significantly reduce the possibility of Houthi misinterpretation that there will be political rewards from using the humanitarian situation as a bargaining chip.

The humanitarian contingency plan

The Coalition has developed a multifaceted humanitarian contingency plan, which is already being implemented, for relief in both Hudaydah and the broader country, in full coordination with the United Nations Resident Coordinator in Yemen and with designated United Nations agencies and international NGOs. The Coalition's humanitarian response is premised upon a wide range of scenarios, including Houthi destruction of humanitarian infrastructure and civilian displacement. This humanitarian response plan is not proposed by the Coalition as a panacea: the humanitarian situation in Yemen cannot be reversed within a matter of days or weeks. However, it has been carefully designed to provide for the humanitarian needs of the greatest possible number of civilians, minimize the risks to health and safety and mitigate the suffering of the Yemeni people.

Further to the details provided in my above-mentioned letter (S/2018/618), the seven key elements of the humanitarian contingency plan are as follows:

1. Food and nutrition

- The United Arab Emirates will provide emergency food assistance to people in Hudaydah and neighbouring governorates, in coordination with the international community, including international NGOs and United Nations agencies.
- United Nations agencies continue to stockpile a buffer of around 100,000 metric tons of food in and around Hudaydah. WFP estimates that this is sufficient to feed over 6 million people for a period of one month. An additional 54,000 emergency food kits, each feeding a family of seven for one week, are also stockpiled. WFP is engaged in a major effort to distribute food to Hudaydah residents.
- The ports of Hudaydah and Salif remain open, pursuant to Coalition commitment, with a robust queue of supplies for unloading. As at 3 July 2018, five ships were being unloaded in Hudaydah, six were waiting to be unloaded and one was being unloaded in the port of Salif.
- The United Arab Emirates has committed an additional 35,000 metric tons of food and supplies to be delivered by 10 ships, supplemented by 100 trucks

(47 with food, 53 with other supplies) that are currently making deliveries between Khawkhah and Mukha'. To date, Emirates Red Crescent has already provided 9,900 food baskets, benefiting more than 69,300 people in 11 areas (Khawkhah, Wa'rah, Mushaj, Wadi Arafan, Maraqin, Tahtiyah, Matinah, Quwirq, Buqa', Shuqayf and Thaykar).

- There are also 14,000 food baskets pre-positioned for delivery by air, once facilities have been demined and secured. Each food basket is designed for a family of seven persons for one month.
- Additional planning measures are also under way to build food-specific warehousing in additional locations and reinforce roads for heavy-duty transport vehicles and general safety, including demining. Additional trucks will also be allocated for distribution.
- Concurrent with the humanitarian operation, there is a focus on early recovery to supplement food supplies and livelihoods. For instance, the fishermen's wharf in Khawkhah is being repaired and reopened.

2. Health

- There are 3 main hospitals and 19 health centres in Hudaydah, which are being reinforced with new, pre-positioned medical supplies, such as trauma kits, as well as with training and capacity development. The Coalition is coordinating with the United Nations to address current reports that some health centres are reducing services as staff leave.
- Two surgical unit teams are pre-positioned for emergency needs.
- A referral system for emergency cases is in place for civilian hospitals in Aden.
- The Coalition is aware that a fully fledged vaccination programme is currently being planned, and it is strongly supporting efforts to ensure that the re-emergence of cholera is averted at all costs.
- Additional planning measures are also under way to provide medical supplies via air bridge and to ensure adequate fuel supply to medical facilities, including for the cold-chain.

3. Shelter

- The Coalition and its United Nations and NGO partners have pre-positioned significant volumes of emergency shelter kits and non-food items, covering roughly 50,000 persons. In the first two weeks, the United Nations reported approximately 35,000 displaced persons. Additional supplies for further civilian movement subsequently arrived.
- As the number reported by the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs this week is growing, we are strengthening our focus on shelter imports. We are working closely with the Office and the figures they have, to address the needs.
- The Coalition continues to work closely with the United Nations to identify sites for displaced persons and a chain of safe passage, including registration.

4. Water and sanitation

- The United Nations reports that repairs have been made to reverse Houthi damage to water supplies, but the United Nations and the Coalition continue to monitor cholera risks closely. The United Arab Emirates will provide additional

emergency water and sanitation assistance to people in Hudaydah and neighbouring governorates, in coordination with the United Nations and NGOs.

- To respond to Houthi militia disruptions of water supplies, additional Coalition planning measures are under way to upgrade existing water and sanitation systems, including fuel supply, and to establish a trucking system to provide additional water supply. Chlorine tablets, latrines and washing stations are also being prepared for both temporary sites and public buildings.

5. Fuel

- Fuel needs in the Hudaydah area include mazut (a heavy fuel oil) and diesel. Critical uses include water pumping and treatment for sanitation, hospitals and wheat mills, requiring at least 12 million gallons of mazut and 500,000 gallons of diesel per month. The United Nations and NGO partners accordingly have pre-positioned fuel supplies at many key sites.
- While storage and ships currently in Hudaydah port are estimated to have supplies to cover critical uses, fuel continues to be an essential component for humanitarian infrastructure, and it is the Coalition's commitment to ensure that a steady supply of fuel continues to reach Hudaydah, especially for hospital and sanitation pump usage. Additional fuel supplies and mobile tanks will also be brought by sea and by road from Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates.

6. Port restoration and alternatives

- Given the critical nature of Hudaydah port, the Coalition has pre-positioned port construction and logistics teams and equipment to repair any Houthi damage to Hudaydah port, as well as expand capacity. Equipment includes cranes, tug boats, diesel tankers and other items.
- To enable aid flows through other ports in the event of Houthi damage to Hudaydah, import facilities are in place at Aden, Mukalla and Mukha' in Yemen and Jazan port in Saudi Arabia. Indicatively, following the liberation of Aden port by the Coalition, food imports have increased by 82 per cent. From those ports, supplies would be largely transported by land, supplemented by air service.
- Access through Hudaydah airport, once security clearance has been given, will provide an additional import route.
- Demining activities are under way at the airport and ready to be commenced at the port.

7. Deconfliction

- The Coalition remains committed to the safety of civilians and humanitarian workers through deconfliction practices. Updates to the no-strike list maintained by the Evacuation and Humanitarian Operations Cell are being continually being made by the United Nations and other actors, notably including recent additions of further water system sites.
- The Coalition also remains committed to working with the United Nations to investigate any alleged damages from Coalition activities, such as the report on 17 June 2018 of damage to the windshield of an unoccupied WFP vehicle.

The United Arab Emirates reaffirms that the United Nations and humanitarian agencies have an essential role to play in ensuring the welfare of the residents of Hudaydah and reiterates its commitment to continuing close coordination with humanitarian entities. The Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs has

separately reported positive progress in the implementation of the Yemen humanitarian response plan, to which the United Arab Emirates and Saudi Arabia contributed an unearmarked and unrestricted \$930 million in March 2018.

We are establishing a civil-military operations centre in the Hudaydah area that will be staffed within a week, to further facilitate humanitarian coordination with humanitarian agencies on the ground. We take this opportunity to reiterate our gratitude for the extraordinary coordination work of the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, with whom we are in constant dialogue.

The United Arab Emirates continues to share the deep concern of the members of the Security Council for the well-being of the people of Hudaydah and those who are supplied by its port.

(Signed) Reem Al Hashimy
Minister of State for International Cooperation

**Security Council**

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Original: English

United Nations operation in Cyprus**Report of the Secretary-General****I. Introduction**

1. The present report on the United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus (UNFICYP) covers developments from 19 December 2017 to 20 June 2018. It brings up to date, since the issuance of my report dated 9 January 2018 (S/2018/25), the record of activities carried out by UNFICYP pursuant to Security Council resolution 186 (1964) and subsequent Council resolutions, most recently resolution 2398 (2018).
2. As at 20 June 2018, the strength of the military component stood at 807 (753 men and 54 women) for all ranks, while the strength of the police component stood at 65 (43 men and 22 women) (see annex).

II. Mission context

3. My report on progress towards a settlement in Cyprus issued on 14 June 2018 (S/2018/610), submitted pursuant to Security Council resolution 2398 (2018), set out in detail the most significant political developments during the period under review. While acknowledging the continued hiatus in the talks since July 2017, I encouraged greater efforts towards creating more propitious conditions for their possible resumption, and outlined next steps to be taken by the United Nations. The role of UNFICYP in contributing to conditions conducive to negotiations will be covered in the present report.
4. The environment in which UNFICYP operates includes the area in and around the buffer zone, a porous stretch of land representing approximately 3 per cent of the island, and two ceasefire lines delineated by the United Nations but not formally recognized by the sides. The opposing forces are deployed on either side with a strength of approximately 1,000 armed soldiers each, consisting mostly of young conscripts, facing each other daily along the respective ceasefire lines. Thousands of additional soldiers are deployed across the island, making Cyprus one of the most militarized places per capita in the world. The buffer zone stretches 180 kilometres east to west, with a width varying from seven kilometres to less than four metres in the capital, Nicosia. The two opposing forces and the sides more broadly have fundamentally different perceptions of the buffer zone: the Turkish Forces and Turkish Cypriots see it as a sterile area, whereas the Republic of Cyprus encourages Greek Cypriot civilian activities in the buffer zone.



5. The de facto division of the island, which has persisted for decades, has been characterized by the lack of direct communication between the opposing forces, police services and civilian authorities; UNFICYP is the sole interlocutor between them. In addition to its patrols, the mission passes messages daily, decreasing tensions by ensuring that disagreements and disputes are resolved quickly and at a technical level, whenever possible.

III. Implementation of the strategic review of the United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus

6. In a previous report on UNFICYP (S/2017/1008), I presented the recommendations of the review team I appointed pursuant to Security Council resolution 2369 (2017), led by an independent expert, Wolfgang Weisbrod-Weber. I am pleased to state that, as at 20 June 2018, 94 per cent of the review recommendations have been implemented, except for those depending on the approval of the mission's budget request for 2018/19.

7. During the reporting period, the military force reduced its authorized strength from 888 to 860 personnel and its actual strength to 807, while strengthening its liaison functions.

8. The police component redeployed six individual police officers from headquarters to patrolling functions, which has allowed increased joint military and police patrols and some, albeit limited, night-time patrolling. Those changes, together with the transfer of the mission's three international civil affairs officers from the mission's headquarters to the existing Sector Civilian Activity Integrated Offices, along with five Cypriot national staff, have strengthened integration among the three components, as well as liaison and engagement capacity vis-à-vis respective interlocutors at the sector level.

9. While Ledra Palace Hotel will continue to be used for offices and intercommunal activities, the accommodation of sector 2 military personnel will be relocated from Ledra Palace Hotel to the United Nations Protected Area, subject to available resources. In addition, the mission plans to recruit a Head of Joint Mission Analysis Centre, which will enable UNFICYP to increase its situational awareness and use its resources more effectively.

IV. Activities of the United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus

10. Prevention is at the core of the work of UNFICYP. The mission works continually to maintain calm and stability in and around the buffer zone and keep tensions low, actively engaging with the sides to ensure that incidents do not escalate and that the military status quo is maintained. Through their daily patrols in the buffer zone and their liaison and engagement with the opposing forces and respective police forces, the military and police components of UNFICYP deter and prevent military violations or other incidents that could raise tensions between the opposing forces, between civilians and the opposing forces, and among civilians.

11. The civilian component of UNFICYP, in coordination with the military and police components, works, inter alia, to manage the authorized activity of civilians who farm and work in the buffer zone and to address unauthorized activity, including hunting, which contributes to the overall calm and stability in that area. The mission also helps to build confidence between the two communities through a variety of intercommunal initiatives, further contributing to maintaining calm, promoting

mutual understanding and creating conditions conducive to a resumption of viable talks.

12. In the absence of any direct contact between the opposing forces, police or civilian authorities, continual liaison by UNFICYP between those entities on both sides of the island is critical to preventing a recurrence of fighting.

A. Prevention of a recurrence of fighting and maintenance of the military status quo

13. The respectful relationship and professional interactions between UNFICYP and the opposing forces remain paramount to the mission's ability to achieve its objectives, and they have been further enhanced through the implementation of the recommendations of the strategic review, including the increased focus on liaison and engagement. Those relationships and interactions are crucial to preserving stability and de-escalating tensions, especially in the absence of acceptance by the sides of the aide-memoire of 1989.

14. In addition to enhanced liaison and engagement activity, the number of patrols, including combined military-police patrols, has been increased and broadened across all sectors. The mobile force reserve has been increasingly used as a surge capacity and a force multiplier to provide additional support at flashpoints across the buffer zone; to address reports of ill-discipline between the opposing forces; and to gather information on and deter smuggling, illegal migration and human trafficking through the buffer zone.

15. During the reporting period, 207 military violations were recorded, compared with 184 during the same period in the previous year. Most of the violations involved moves forward into the buffer zone and the overmanning of positions by the opposing forces, which occurred on both sides. UNFICYP also continued to monitor and report on breaches of the maritime security line, which is routinely crossed by Turkish forces conducting resupply to the Kokkina pocket.

16. The prevalence of closed-circuit television (CCTV) equipment at positions that remain manned and other enhancements of military positions is a growing concern. CCTV equipment installed by either side at a position confers a military advantage unless the position is simultaneously unmanned. Since my previous report, and despite objections by UNFICYP, there have been 17 new military violations involving the installation of CCTV equipment at Turkish forces positions along the buffer zone without evidence of accompanying unmanning of those positions. The investment in solar panels to power the cameras and in a networked microwave communications system to transmit information to local headquarters, along with the installation of water pipes at the positions, as observed by UNFICYP, are indications of the envisaged permanence of those cameras and of the positions themselves.

17. Further to the recommendations of the strategic review and the military capability study of UNFICYP, the mission enhanced its patrolling, which, inter alia, led to the detection of unauthorized heavy weapons at Greek Cypriot National Guard observation posts in Nicosia and on the southern ceasefire line in the west of the island, including mortars, rocket-propelled grenades and M-60 machine guns.

18. Military positions established by both forces inside the buffer zone that violate the status quo, including at Strovilia, remain in place and are classified as permanent violations. The United Nations continues to hold the Government of Turkey responsible for the status quo in Varosha.

19. Civilian activities in the buffer zone continued to be reported in connection with military violations, including some of the moves forward into the buffer zone or overmanning of positions. For example, in May and June, Turkish Cypriot security forces moved forward in sector 2 to help organize a "North Cyprus rally" with support from the Turkish Cypriot authorities but without authorization from UNFICYP.

20. Over the past months, both sides have been conducting training within visibility of the other side without prior notification to UNFICYP, which constitutes a military violation. Instances of ill-discipline by the opposing forces in areas of central Nicosia, where the buffer zone is narrowest, is a worrying issue that UNFICYP continued to address through liaison, both at the political and tactical levels.

21. Given the passage of time and new challenges presented by increasing civilian activity in the buffer zone, UNFICYP has taken steps to update the 1989 aide-memoire on the supervision of the ceasefire, referenced in previous reports. The updated version is based on current realities and good practices observed on the ground, and is intended to provide greater clarity and transparency on the modus operandi of UNFICYP.

B. Contribution to law and order

22. The police component of UNFICYP continued to focus on contributing to the maintenance of law and order in the buffer zone, where the respective police services are not present. In accordance with the recommendations of the strategic review, the UNFICYP police component increased its patrols, including jointly with the military and civilian components, as well as its engagement with civilians and security forces. The police component, jointly with the military and civil affairs components of the mission, paid special attention to land disputes in the buffer zone so as to avoid their escalation.

23. The mission continued to facilitate the work of the bicomunal Technical Committee on Crime and Criminal Matters and the Joint Communications Room, including through the deployment of two police officers dedicated to the Room. The Joint Communications Room is a unique arrangement built on delicate but constructive working relationships among the four Cypriot individuals manning it, who are associated with the respective police services on the island. It allows for information-sharing regarding crimes that concern both communities, including murder investigations, abductions, drug trafficking and theft, and facilitates the handover of suspects as appropriate. During the reporting period, the Joint Communications Room received 123 requests, including to facilitate the transfer of a British citizen detained in the north back to the south, to facilitate the exchange of information regarding the murder of a Greek Cypriot in the north and to facilitate the transfer of a Turkish national incarcerated for a double murder, who had escaped prison in Turkey and fled to the north of Cyprus, and was eventually apprehended in the south.

24. The UNFICYP police remained the only continuous police presence in Pyla, the sole bicomunal village in the buffer zone, constituting the first point of contact for the local inhabitants when reporting crimes. The UNFICYP police continued to liaise closely with the respective police services, including with regard to the nine unlicensed casinos in the village and related crime. Following the simultaneous search of the casinos by both police services in November 2016, which was facilitated by the UNFICYP police component, 33 people were brought before the courts in the Republic of Cyprus and charged with offences related to illegal gambling. The matters are still before the courts.

25. Similarly, the 11 cases concerning the incidents of 18 November 2015, in which, during protests in south Nicosia, Greek Cypriot youths threw stones at two vehicles belonging to Turkish Cypriots, resulting in injury to two Turkish Cypriots, are still before the courts. A Greek Cypriot involved in one of the cases was given a suspended sentence of four months in prison.

26. According to the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), Cyprus has seen a steady increase in the number of asylum applications since 2013, with 4,499 persons applying for asylum in 2017, a 54 per cent increase compared with 2016. The largest group of asylum seekers came from the Syrian Arab Republic, followed by India, Nepal, Bangladesh and Egypt. The upward trend in the number of asylum applications continued in the first quarter of 2018, with 1,372 persons applying for asylum, representing an 18.72 per cent increase compared with the same period in 2017. UNHCR estimates that most of the undocumented migrants currently present in the south crossed illegally through the porous areas of the buffer zone. In response, UNFICYP increased its patrols in areas of the buffer zone suspected to be used by refugees and undocumented migrants. If the trend continues, it will add another challenging dimension to the work of UNFICYP in Cyprus.

C. Management of civilian activity in the buffer zone

27. Authorized civilian activity in and adjacent to the buffer zone has steadily increased over the past decade, as part of a return to normal conditions on the island. Meanwhile, unauthorized incursions into the buffer zone are slowly decreasing, possibly reflecting greater compliance with UNFICYP procedures for civilian use of the buffer zone.

28. Despite those trends, the more than 2,000 unauthorized activities reported each year, together with more than 2,500 authorized activities each year, continue to challenge the capacity of UNFICYP to manage and maintain calm in the buffer zone. Civilian activities can lead to confrontations, either between civilians, including armed, camouflaged hunters, or between civilians and the opposing forces. During the reporting period, tensions continued to be registered between civilians in the buffer zone over contested ownership of property. Given that incidents can involve both the opposing forces and civilians, all three components of UNFICYP are involved in the response through engagement with military and civilian authorities as well as community representatives and civilians who use land in and around the buffer zone.

29. As part of its efforts to manage the buffer zone, the mission issues permits for authorized activities, including farming, grazing, construction and utility maintenance. Currently, there are 5,049 active permits issued for ongoing activities; 650 of those were issued during the reporting period. Each permit requires a resource-intensive three-component analysis of the security and other implications of the requested activity. As I noted in my previous report (S/2018/25), ensuring that official hunting maps do not include areas in the buffer zone and the provision of vector data would help UNFICYP map and better monitor activity in the buffer zone. I note that, despite the commitment previously made by the Republic of Cyprus, those issues remain unaddressed. I also note that the university in Pyla continues to operate without authorization from UNFICYP.

D. Restoration of normal conditions and humanitarian functions

Intercommunal relations

30. Despite the opening of the first crossing in 2003 and six others thereafter, as well as multiple efforts over the years to promote meaningful contact and strengthen intercommunal relations, sustained cooperation between the communities remains limited. Several generations have now lived and grown up apart. In that context, UNFICYP has developed an intercommunal strategy to contribute to trust-building and a return to normal conditions on the island. The strategy is based on the mission's comparative advantage as convenor and connector, supporting Cypriots who are interested in reaching across the divide and engaging in intercommunal dialogue and cooperation. That "multiplier effect" is particularly important given the mission's limited resources. Such an approach is also anchored in the reputation of UNFICYP as an honest broker and provider of a "neutral space" for contact and cooperation. A promising initiative facilitated by UNFICYP, with its strengthened presence in the sectors, involves promoting local ownership of common community spaces at locations outside Nicosia. The initiative is based on the successful "Home for Cooperation" in Nicosia — a space that is used extensively by civil society organizations from both sides for a broad range of intercommunal activities and events.

31. In that regard, the mission's intercommunal strategy is focused on support for local initiatives in and around the buffer zone. During the reporting period, UNFICYP supported 81 intercommunal activities organized by civil society actors and convened 113 intercommunal gatherings at Ledra Palace Hotel with more than 4,927 participants. Of particular note is that UNFICYP has been supporting the revitalization of the Nicosia Master Plan, which was established in 1979 to bring the two communities of Nicosia together to work for an improved city for all, but which has seen little activity in recent years. With support from the Technical Committee on the Environment, funding from the European Union Programme Support Office and assistance from UNFICYP, which has, inter alia, facilitated collaboration between the Nicosia mayors, the Nicosia Master Plan has been carrying out a feasibility study to extend a linear park across divided Nicosia as a venue for Cypriots to use together.

32. Additional efforts to enhance intercommunal relations included continued scoping and outreach to new actors. In total, UNFICYP held 90 meetings with established civil society organizations to support their activities and facilitate meaningful interactions between civil society actors from both communities. As part of a "networking group" composed of non-governmental organizations seeking to establish contacts with the other community, UNFICYP established two clusters, one for youth and one for those interested in cultural and artistic initiatives. Another objective is to expand existing activities to more remote areas and to support initiatives with civil society outside Nicosia, as well as to promote sustained interaction and cooperation.

33. Following the deployment of the first Gender Affairs Officer, UNFICYP launched several initiatives to promote gender equality and strengthen its work with women's civil society organizations island-wide. The mission made special efforts to reach out to more women through the establishment of a series of diverse focus groups aimed at better informing the mission's implementation of the women, peace and security agenda.

34. UNFICYP is responsible for facilitating the work of 8 of the 11 bicomunal technical committees, established by the leaders in 2008 to work on confidence-building measures aimed at improving the everyday life of Cypriots. The Technical

Committee on Cultural Heritage, with financial support from the European Commission and technical support from the Partnership for the Future programme of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), completed five major architectural restoration projects, providing opportunities for Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots to come together regarding their common heritage. The Technical Committee on Crossings, facilitated by UNFICYP and supported by the European Union and UNDP, continued to work towards opening two crossings at Lefka-Aplici/Lefke-Apıç and Deryneia/Derinya. However, as at 20 June, outstanding issues remained relating to the completion of infrastructure works at both crossings and the relocation of a Turkish Forces post north of the Deryneia/Derinya crossing that had been addressed by the Technical Committee on Crossings. The Technical Committee on Education met twice during the reporting period, lending its support to the Imagine project (see para. 35). The other committees did not meet or engaged in limited activities during the reporting period. As noted in my report on progress towards a settlement in Cyprus (S/2018/610), several confidence-building measures that the leaders jointly agreed to in May 2015 have not been implemented.

35. Education is a key conduit for helping young generations develop critical thinking and openness to other perspectives, which is in turn necessary to develop trust and ultimately reconcile with other communities. Peace education can help children, youth and adults create, inter alia, the conditions conducive to peace, whether at an interpersonal, intergroup, national or international level. While efforts by the sides have been modest in that regard, the Imagine project, developed by the bicomunal Association for Historical Dialogue and Research under the auspices of the Technical Committee on Education, with support from the Embassy of Germany and facilitated in part by UNFICYP, continued to increase connections between children from both communities. It provided, for example, 50 "twinning" experiences (i.e., mixed classes) focused on peace education and joint activities.

Civil society support to the peace process

36. Given the current political climate in relation to the Cyprus problem and the notable lack of leader-led talks, discouragement among Cypriots who continued to hope for a reunified island was palpable. As I noted in my report of 14 June 2018 (S/2018/610), there were nonetheless civil society actors who became increasingly vocal and steadfastly continued their work to build a foundation for peace during the reporting period, some of whom were supported by members of the international community.

37. The religious leaders of Cyprus continued to demonstrate their commitment to joint dialogue and the promotion of religious freedom within the framework of the religious track of the Cyprus peace process, under the auspices of the Embassy of Sweden and with ongoing support from UNFICYP. During the reporting period, they launched an unprecedented joint initiative to provide Greek- and Turkish-language classes in the buffer zone for members of the clerical orders, nuns and laypersons working in different religious institutions. The religious leaders also released a joint statement in support of refugees and asylum seekers on the occasion of World Refugee Day 2018.

38. The Embassy of Slovakia continued to facilitate gatherings of political parties from both sides to engage in dialogue on a broad range of issues, including confidence-building measures and missing persons. The parties met four times during the reporting period, and on 28 April issued a joint declaration calling upon the two leaders to resume the negotiations. Similarly, the celebration of 1 May in the buffer zone in Nicosia saw a gathering of more than 3,000 members of trade unions from both communities, who repeated the call for the leaders to return to the negotiating table.

Facilitation of access

39. As part of its wider efforts to support freedom of worship, UNFICYP continued to liaise with the authorities on both sides in response to requests by Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots to hold religious and commemorative activities. UNFICYP facilitated the participation of more than 16,475 people in 42 services and commemorative events, of which 41 were in the north and 1 in the buffer zone, reflecting an approval rate of 74.5 per cent, compared with 71.4 per cent in the same period in 2017. I note and welcome the increase of authorizations to UNFICYP-supported requests provided by the Turkish Cypriot authorities. I also welcome the continued support of the Republic of Cyprus for the UNFICYP-facilitated annual pilgrimage to Hala Sultan Tekke mosque in Larnaca as well as the mosque's increased opening hours during Ramadan, and I encourage those new hours to continue beyond the Ramadan period.

40. In my report dated 9 January 2018 (S/2018/25), I informed the Security Council that as at 1 October 2017, UNFICYP had been unable to continue to deliver food supplies and other items provided by the Republic of Cyprus to Greek Cypriot and Maronite communities residing in the north, due to the imposition of "duties" on all items except for medical supplies by the Turkish Cypriot authorities. However, in May 2018 UNFICYP was informed that those "duties" would be lifted and, in a positive development, on 31 May deliveries to those communities resumed.

41. During the reporting period, Turkish-speaking pupils continued to have access to Turkish-language education at a primary school and high school in Limassol. There were no developments, however, with respect to the establishment of a Turkish Cypriot elementary school in that city.

42. UNFICYP assisted in addressing the legal and humanitarian issues faced by 11 Turkish Cypriots apprehended in the south and the 3 Greek Cypriots held in the north through visits to the detention facilities where they were held.

E. Demining activity

43. UNFICYP data indicates there are 47 suspected hazardous areas remaining in Cyprus, covering approximately 1.7 million square metres or roughly 0.02 per cent of the land across Cyprus. The four remaining minefields in the buffer zone account for approximately 42 per cent of the suspected contaminated land.

44. The two sides have not begun clearance of the four known minefields in the buffer zone, of which three belong to the National Guard and one to the Turkish forces. While the Turkish Cypriot side has indicated that it would accept the clearance of all four areas as a package, the Greek Cypriot side maintains that its three minefields are required to counter a perceived threat. No additional areas have been released for survey or clearance despite the leaders agreeing to consider doing so in July 2016. On 2 February, the Republic of Cyprus requested a third extension to its deadline, until 1 July 2022, to clear the remaining anti-personnel mines in the north, in accordance with its obligations as a signatory to the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on Their Destruction.

V. Committee on Missing Persons in Cyprus

45. As at 20 June, the bicomunal team of archaeologists of the Committee on Missing Persons in Cyprus, a long-standing humanitarian initiative, had exhumed the remains of 1,217 persons on both sides of the island. To date, the remains of 870

missing persons, of a total of 2,002, have been identified and returned to their respective families, including, during the reporting period, those of 20 individuals. Following the permission received in November 2015, the Committee has thus far conducted 23 excavations, including 1 during the reporting period, in military areas in the north, leading to the recovery of the remains of 34 persons.

46. The Committee continued its efforts to convince countries that had a military or police presence in Cyprus in 1963/64 and 1974 to search their archives for information on possible burial sites of missing persons. During the reporting period, the Committee conducted research visits to the archives of the United Nations and the International Committee of the Red Cross as well as those of Canada and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland. So far, 11 of the 12 countries contacted have answered the Committee's request for cooperation. While extensive efforts have been undertaken by the United Nations to provide the Committee with access to all relevant archival holdings in both Nicosia and New York, none of the parties have thus far shared archival information on possible burial sites with the Committee.

VII. Transition planning

47. As requested by the Security Council, UNFICYP maintained its transition plans in relation to a settlement. No progress was made in the further elaboration of such plans during the reporting period, however, because of the absence of new developments on the issue between the sides.

VIII. Conduct and discipline and sexual exploitation and abuse

48. The mission held 20 information sessions during which 639 military and police personnel were briefed on United Nations Standards of Conduct, including the prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse. The mission used social media to highlight how the United Nations tackles sexual exploitation and abuse and distributed to all mission personnel the "No Excuse" for sexual exploitation and abuse pocket card, which all personnel are expected to carry at all times.

49. During the reporting period, four category 2 allegations were reported and referred for investigation. Six category 1 allegations and four category 2 allegations remain pending, none of which relate to sexual exploitation and abuse.

IX. Financial and administrative aspects

50. The General Assembly, by its resolution 71/300, appropriated the amount of \$54.0 million gross for the maintenance of the United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus for the period from 1 July 2017 to 30 June 2018, inclusive of the voluntary contribution of one third of the net cost of the mission, equivalent to \$18.3 million, from the Government of Cyprus and the voluntary contribution of \$6.5 million from the Government of Greece.

51. As at 19 June 2018, unpaid assessed contributions to the Special Account for the United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus amounted to \$15.0 million. The total outstanding assessed contributions for all peacekeeping operations as at that date amounted to \$2,136.5 million.

52. Reimbursement of troop costs has been made for the period up to 30 April 2018, while reimbursement of the costs of contingent-owned equipment has been made for the period up to 30 September 2017.

X. Observations

53. UNFICYP has served the interests of peace in Cyprus for over 50 years, preventing a recurrence of fighting and contributing to the maintenance of law and order and a return to normal conditions. I am convinced that Cyprus has remained calm and stable throughout the years in large measure because of the unwavering presence of UNFICYP, its preventive and deterrent capabilities and its role in defusing tensions. During this long period, UNFICYP has preserved the trust of the opposing forces, ensuring that incidents do not escalate, cause tensions or disrupt ongoing negotiations. In that respect, it has acted as the sole channel of communication between the opposing forces, working to avoid misunderstandings or miscalculations and ensure a continued climate of calm and security.

54. The impact of the 94 per cent completion rate of the implementation of the November 2017 strategic review recommendations, particularly the increased focus by the mission on liaison and engagement, is starting to manifest itself in the sectors, with strengthened component coordination and more effective outreach. Through its deterrence and prevention roles, which have been enhanced as a result of the strategic review, UNFICYP was able to resolve low-level incidents by patrolling the length of the buffer zone and liaising and engaging more systematically with its military, police and civilian interlocutors.

55. I welcome the mission's initiative to update the 1989 aide-memoire. I reiterate that support and respect for the authority of UNFICYP in the buffer zone is required from both sides if the mission is to resolve security concerns, including those linked to civilian activity, and ensure the maintenance of peace.

56. As I also noted in my report on progress towards a settlement in Cyprus (S/2018/610), it is encouraging that, despite the current hiatus in the talks, some segments of society on both sides, including trade unions, some political parties, women's groups and other organized civic groups, continue to promote a solution based on the bizonal, bicomunal federation with political equality. In order to help create conditions conducive for peace, I appeal to the leaders to provide visible and direct support to civil society organizations in their efforts to increase intercommunal engagement and participation and to bolster trust and reconciliation between the communities. I also encourage the leaders to implement the remaining confidence-building measures they agreed to in 2015, in particular the interoperability of mobile phones, and to consider other confidence-building measures. In addition, I urge the sides to agree on a plan of work to demine and achieve a mine-free Cyprus.

57. Divergent school curricula and rhetoric in the media have reinforced parallel narratives across generations, making it particularly difficult for some Cypriots to envisage a common and mutually beneficial future. It is time for the leaders and both communities to address this most critical of issues, and while the Imagine programme is to be applauded, efforts must go beyond that initiative if the dividends of peace education and pedagogy across all levels of education are to take hold.

58. The opening of the crossings since 2003 has allowed Cypriots freedom of movement across the island, contributing to a return to normal conditions and facilitating contact and interaction for those who wish to avail themselves of the opportunity. In that regard, I call on the leaders to support the opening of the crossings at Lefka-Aplici/Lefke-Aplıç and at Deryneia/Derinya as soon as possible and for the

Technical Committee on Crossings to focus on additional, impactful crossings thereafter.

59. Linked to the above, I continue to urge greater efforts to create a climate conducive to achieving more economic and social parity between the two sides and to broaden and deepen economic, social, cultural, sporting and similar ties and contacts, including with a view to encouraging trade. Such contacts promote trust between the communities and help to address the concerns of Turkish Cypriots with regard to isolation. With regard to intra-island trade, I would underscore the importance of and the opportunities presented by the full implementation of European Council regulation No. 866/2004, the "Green Line regulation", for the benefit of both communities.

60. Normal conditions in and along the buffer zone will always remain limited as long as that stretch of territory remains locked between two belligerent forces. The resolution of the situation clearly lies with a political solution to the Cyprus problem, which I appeal to the sides to address with the requisite political will. As noted in my report on the strategic review of UNFICYP (S/2017/1008), and notwithstanding the mission's ongoing liaison role, it is my hope that the two sides will work with UNFICYP on coming together to address some of their differences directly to alleviate tensions and resolve day-to-day issues that affect all Cypriots.

61. Regarding the sensitive and tragic issue of the missing, the United Nations remains committed to supporting the important humanitarian work carried out on behalf of the families of victims by the Committee on Missing Persons in Cyprus. In the light of the advanced age of both relatives and witnesses, it is critical that the Committee continue to receive sufficient financial support and the information, including from relevant archives, required to accelerate its work. In particular, I encourage the parties to intensify their efforts to share relevant archival information with the Commission.

62. In the light of the mission's continued relevance on the ground, I recommend that the Security Council extend the mandate of UNFICYP for six months, until 31 January 2019. I look forward to seeing the further dividends of the mission's enhanced liaison and engagement capacity resulting from the recent strategic review recommendations, which recognized the ongoing critical role of UNFICYP in preventing serious incidents and keeping tensions low. At the same time, the Secretariat remains ready, as with all missions, to keep UNFICYP continuously under review.

63. I should like to thank the 36 countries that have contributed, since 1964, either troops, police or both to the mission. I pay tribute to the 186 peacekeepers who lost their lives during that period in support of peace in Cyprus.

64. The work of the United Nations in Cyprus is strengthened immeasurably through cooperation with local, regional and international actors. I should like to take this opportunity to thank those partners and in particular the European Commission and UNDP, which have provided assistance in a number of areas, including support to the ongoing work on two new crossing points and to the Technical Committee on Cultural Heritage and the Committee on Missing Persons in Cyprus.

65. I should like to express my gratitude to Elizabeth Spehar for her service as my Special Representative in Cyprus, the Head of UNFICYP and my Deputy Special Adviser. Lastly, I extend my thanks to all the men and women serving in UNFICYP for their continued commitment to the implementation of the mandate of the mission.

Annex

**Countries providing military and police personnel to the
United Nations operation in Cyprus (as at 20 June 2018)**

<i>Country</i>	<i>Military personnel</i>
Argentina	239
Austria	4
Bangladesh	2
Brazil	2
Canada	1
Chile	14
Hungary	65
Paraguay	14
Serbia	45
Slovakia	141
Ukraine	2
United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	278
Total^a	807

<i>Country</i>	<i>Police personnel</i>
Bosnia and Herzegovina	11
Bulgaria	3
China	6
Ireland	12
Italy	2
Lithuania	1
Montenegro	4
Romania	4
Russian Federation	6
Serbia	2
Slovakia	3
Sweden	2
Ukraine	9
Total^a	65

^a Of the military personnel, 753 are men and 54 are women. Of the police personnel, 43 are men and 22 are women.



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Implementation of resolution 2367 (2017)**Report of the Secretary-General****I. Introduction**

1. The present report is submitted pursuant to Security Council resolution 2367 (2017), in which the Secretary-General was requested to report every three months on progress made towards fulfilling the mandate of the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI). The report covers key developments relating to Iraq and provides an update on the activities of the United Nations in Iraq since my previous report, dated 17 April (S/2018/359), and the briefing of my Special Representative for Iraq and Head of UNAMI to the Security Council on 30 May, until 21 June 2018.

II. Summary of key political developments**A. Political situation**

2. On 12 May, Iraq concluded its first elections following the defeat of Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) and its fourth under the Constitution of 2005. On election day, 52,483 polling stations opened, including more than 3,000 dedicated to internally displaced persons. In addition, advanced special voting for the security forces took place on 10 May, while out-of-country voting was held on 10 and 11 May. Based on field reports gathered by the Independent High Electoral Commission, most polling stations opened on time, although delays were encountered at several owing to challenges with new technology for voter verification and vote counting and sorting. A total of 449 polling stations — 370 in Anbar Governorate and 79 in Kirkuk Governorate — did not open at all, while 262 polling stations in 12 governorates had to use alternative scanning devices because of a malfunction of the new technology.

3. Although, prior to the elections, Grand Ayatollah Ali al-Sistani had emphasized that participation in the elections was the right of every eligible citizen, he left it to every individual to choose whether to participate. As concerns over low voter turnout arose during election day, the Prime Minister, Haider Al Abadi, decided in the afternoon to order the lifting of movement restrictions that had been put in place for security reasons. In an additional effort to boost participation in the last hours of the polls, political and religious leaders publicly urged Iraqis to vote. After the elections, the Independent High Electoral Commission announced a turnout of 44.52 per cent (10.8 million of a total 24.3 million eligible voters). This figure includes 9 million



votes cast on 12 May itself, 1 million on 10 May (special voting for security forces and prisoners) and 179,000 out-of-country votes.

4. Immediately following the closure of the polls, several senior officials and political party representatives issued public statements on the electoral process. The President, Fuad Masum, expressed satisfaction with the organization of the process and the professionalism of polling staff. The Prime Minister praised the performances of the Independent High Electoral Commission and the security forces during an "historic day", providing security and enabling voters to cast their votes. One of the three Vice-Presidents, Nouri al-Maliki, thanked the Commission for its efforts and the political parties for their adherence to the United Nations-facilitated Electoral Charter of Honour, in which parties had been called upon to conduct the elections freely, fairly, impartially, transparently and credibly. In addition, cleric Muqtada al-Sadr congratulated the Iraqi people on a "successful democratic day". However, one of the three Vice-Presidents, Ayad Allawi, and the Speaker, Salim al-Jubouri, expressed concerns about technical shortfalls, calling upon the relevant authorities to address them diligently and neutrally, while another of the three Vice-Presidents, Osama al-Nujaifi, commented on problems encountered with voting devices and reports of intimidation and fraud.

5. The international community congratulated Iraq on the parliamentary elections. Notably, on 13 May, the Secretary of State of the United States of America, Mike Pompeo, congratulated the Iraqi people and pledged that the United States would stand ready to partner with the new Government to "continue to build a long-term relationship of cooperation and friendship ... to contribute to stability in the region and growing peace and prosperity in Iraq". On the same day, the Minister of State for the Middle East of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Alistair Burt, congratulated the Iraqi people, security forces and electoral authorities on the peaceful conduct of the elections. He stated that his Government looked forward to working with the new Government to "help deliver stability, security and prosperity for all Iraqis". On 14 May, the Islamic Republic of Iran congratulated the nation and Government of Iraq on holding successful elections in a secure environment, which it deemed a continuation of the country's victory against terrorism. It highlighted the intention of the Islamic Republic of Iran to further cement friendly relations between the two countries. On the same day, the Secretary-General of the League of Arab States, Ahmed Aboul Gheit, congratulated the Government and people of Iraq on holding successful parliamentary elections. On 15 May, the Emir of Kuwait, Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, congratulated the President and the Prime Minister of Iraq on the success of the elections.

6. On 19 May, the Independent High Electoral Commission released provisional election results. Of 329 parliamentary seats, the Sa'iron Alliance won 54 seats, the Conquest Alliance 47 seats, the Victory Alliance 42 seats, the State of Law coalition 25 seats, the Kurdistan Democratic Party 25 seats, the Wataniya coalition 21 seats, the National Wisdom Movement 19 seats, the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan 18 seats and the Iraqi Decision Alliance 14 seats. Nine seats reserved for minority components were also allocated: five seats for Christians and one each for Yazidis, Shabaks, Sabeian Mandaean and Farsi Kurds. In line with the constitutional requirement for female parliamentary representation, women candidates gained 84 seats, or 25.5 per cent of the total.

7. The release of the provisional results triggered the start of the formal complaint and adjudication process. The Independent High Electoral Commission received 1,438 complaints, including 27 pertaining to out-of-country voting and 139 on special voting. The Commission identified 33 complaints for full investigation, following which it decided to cancel the results from 768 polling stations in Anbar, Baghdad, Dahuk, Diyala, Erbil, Ninawa, Salah al-Din and Sulaymaniyah Governorates. An

appeal process against the Commission's decisions was concluded on 31 May. The Commission recorded 1,882 appeals, which were subsequently referred to the Electoral Judicial Panel, convened to adjudicate all appeals prior to the certification of the results by the Federal Supreme Court.

8. Turkmen- and Arab-led parties in Kirkuk Governorate contested the results there, alleging tampering with electronic vote-counting devices. Demonstrations and sit-ins were organized in and around the city of Kirkuk, notably surrounding the warehouse of the Independent High Electoral Commission, with hundreds of protestors demanding a recount. In Anbar Governorate, the Wataniya coalition and the Iraqi Decision Alliance demanded the annulment of conditional votes by internally displaced persons owing to alleged fraud. In the Kurdistan Region, on 13 May, the Movement for Change, the Kurdistan Islamic Union, the Kurdistan Islamic Group, the Kurdistan Communist Party, the New Generation Movement and the Alliance for Democracy and Justice jointly announced their rejection of the results and requested a repeat of the elections in the Kurdistan Region and the disputed areas, calling upon the Commission to investigate allegations of fraud.

9. Several political parties and candidates also challenged the election results directly through the Council of Representatives (the parliament), outside the legal complaint process. Following a request submitted by 81 parliamentarians, the Speaker convened a special session on 19 May to discuss alleged voting irregularities, which were attributed to the performance of the Independent High Electoral Commission staff and the malfunctioning of electronic devices. On 28 May, the Council adopted a decision calling for a manual recount of at least 10 per cent of all ballot boxes, noting that a full manual recount might be needed if significant deviation from the earlier results were found. The Council further called for the annulment of out-of-country voting results and the voting results of internally displaced persons in all governorates except Ninawa and Anbar Governorates.

10. The President met the Vice-Presidents on 29 May to discuss the decision of the Council of Representatives, subsequently issuing a statement in which all parties were called upon to follow the correct legal procedures with regard to complaints and appeals. The following day, he wrote to the Federal Supreme Court, asking it to issue an opinion on the constitutionality of the Council's decision. He subsequently issued a statement saying that the Council had no authority to demand a total or partial annulment of election results.

11. During an extraordinary meeting on 24 May, the Council of Ministers decided to form an investigative committee, chaired by the director of the Federal Board of Supreme Audit, to view all documents pertaining to the electoral process and submit recommendations to the Supreme Judicial Council, the Federal Supreme Court and the Electoral Judicial Panel. On 5 June, the Council of Ministers approved the report of the investigative committee, in which the committee recommended the manual sorting and recounting of votes in no less than 5 per cent of all polling stations in order to verify and cross-check results and the annulment of out-of-country voting results and some of the results from the polling stations for internally displaced persons in Anbar and Ninawa Governorates. The committee also recommended the prosecution of those involved in electoral violations. It further recommended that electronic counting and sorting devices not be used in future electoral processes and that the Independent High Electoral Commission Law be amended to ensure that future electoral processes would be overseen and managed by judges.

12. On 6 June, the Council of Representatives adopted an amendment to the Council of Representatives Elections Law, requiring the Independent High Electoral Commission to perform a full manual ballot recount under the supervision of judges appointed by the Supreme Judicial Council and in the presence of representatives of

political parties and temporarily suspending the work of the current Board of Commissioners. The amendment annuls the results of out-of-country voting and special (i.e. security forces and prisoners) voting in the Kurdistan Region, as well as the results of the voting by internally displaced persons in Anbar, Salah al-Din, Ninawa and Diyala Governorates.

13. On 10 June, the Supreme Judicial Council announced that nine judges had been nominated to replace the Board of Commissioners until the recount process was completed, together with the 19 judges who would replace the directors general of the governorate electoral offices. The work of the Electoral Judicial Panel relating to the appeals and complaints was suspended pending the completion of the recount process and the submission of new appeals.

14. On the same day, a fire damaged the warehouses of the Independent High Electoral Commission in the Rusafah area of Baghdad, which contained the electronic vote tabulation devices and voter verification kits used in the parliamentary elections. An investigative committee established by the Ministry of the Interior subsequently stated that the fire had been set deliberately, adding that four suspects had been arrested.

15. On 13 June, the Federal Supreme Court announced that it had decided not to rule on the five petitions requesting the suspension of the implementation of the amended law, stating that it could not issue a ruling before a final judgment had been made on the constitutionality of the amendment. On 21 June, the Court ruled on the constitutionality of the amended law, stating that it was in line with the Constitution, but that the provision to annul the results of out-of-country voting and special voting by the security forces in the Kurdistan Region, as well as the results of the conditional voting by prisoners and internally displaced persons in Anbar, Salah al-Din, Ninawa and Diyala Governorates, contradicted the Constitution and denied the rights of voters.

B. Relations between Baghdad and Erbil

16. Discussions between the federal Government and the Kurdistan Regional Government over outstanding issues, including oil and gas management and revenue, the disputed internal boundaries and the status of Kirkuk Governorate, paused during the campaigning and post-election periods. On 22 May, two separate delegations representing the Kurdistan Democratic Party and the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan arrived in Baghdad to discuss the formation of the next federal Government with other Iraqi leaders. The delegations held separate meetings with the Prime Minister, the Vice-President (Mr. al-Maliki) and party leaders Muqtada al-Sadr, Hadi al-Amiri and Ammar al-Hakiri. The following day, 23 May, the President convened a meeting with both delegations to discuss government formation. Also on 22 May, the head of the New Generation Movement, Shaswar Abdulwahid Qadir, travelled to Baghdad where he met Muqtada al-Sadr to discuss a non-sectarian-based political agenda. The Chair of the Alliance for Democracy and Justice, Barham Salih, visited Baghdad on 5 June to meet the Prime Minister, the Vice-President (Mr. Allawi) and Mr. al-Amiri to discuss the government formation process.

17. Disagreements among the main parties in the Kurdistan Region became more pronounced following the announcement of the provisional election results. Following calls by the Movement for Change, the New Generation Movement, the Kurdistan Islamic Union, the Kurdistan Islamic Group, the Kurdistan Communist Party and the Alliance for Democracy and Justice for the annulment of results and a rerun of the elections, on 16 May the Prime Minister of the Kurdistan Regional Government, Nechirvan Barzani, publicly underlined the importance of Kurdish unity

in the post-election period, while also calling upon the Independent High Electoral Commission to investigate the allegations. The Patriotic Union of Kurdistan also called for a united Iraqi Kurdish position in the talks on the formation of the new federal Government.

18. On 7 May, in a letter to the Kurdistan Regional Parliament, the Prime Minister of the Kurdistan Regional Government proposed that the regional parliamentary elections be held on 30 September. He subsequently clarified that the Kurdistan Democratic Party was ready to hold both parliamentary and presidential elections simultaneously, in line with the Kurdistan Region Presidency Law of 2005. The status of the Kurdistan Region presidential role has remained unclear following the resignation of the President of the Kurdistan Regional Government, Masoud Barzani, in October 2017. In the light of the concerns raised in the Kurdistan Region over the conduct of the elections to the Council of Representatives, the Kurdistan Independent High Electoral and Referendum Commission unanimously decided on 24 May to employ manual vote counting for the regional elections.

19. On 6 May, the Federal Supreme Court announced that it had, upon the request of the Kurdistan Regional Government, postponed its hearing on the legality of the independent oil exports by the Ministry of Natural Resources of the Kurdistan Region until 3 June. On 3 June, the Court announced that the hearing had been postponed.

C. Security

20. The Iraqi security forces have continued operations to clear ISIL remnants in Anbar Governorate and in the Tall Afar, Ba'aj and Sinjar districts of Ninawa Governorate. Nevertheless, asymmetric attacks have continued in Ninawa, Salah al-Din, Kirkuk, Anbar, Diyala and Baghdad Governorates, with ISIL targeting security forces and community leaders and also destroying farms and residential buildings. On 16 May, an ISIL suicide bomber detonated his explosive vest during a funeral in the Tarmiyah area of Baghdad Governorate, killing at least 7 civilians and wounding 25 others. According to an official report, the suicide bomber was a 9-year-old boy. The group also claimed responsibility for a suicide attack on 23 May in which 13 people were killed and 25 wounded in Saqlawiyah Park in Baghdad. On 8 June, an explosion in the city of Kirkuk reportedly killed 2 people and wounded 14 others.

21. Although ISIL released a statement on 22 April in which it expressed intent to disrupt the elections, the vote was conducted without major security incidents. After the closing of the polls, the Prime Minister and the Minister of the Interior, Qasim al-Araji, thanked the security forces for successfully securing the elections. A total of 55 security incidents were recorded on election day, 35 of which were perceived as having a direct connection to the election. These included the detonation of improvised explosive devices, attacks on polling stations by mortars or rockets, and small arms fire and clashes between the Iraqi security forces with unknown gunmen. Three civilians were killed and five civilians and three police officers were wounded in the incidents. The most significant incidents occurred in Diyala, Kirkuk and Salah al-Din Governorates, including the shelling of three polling stations by ISIL fighters in Abu Sayda in Diyala Governorate, wounding four civilians. Sporadic violence continued across the country after the elections. On 25 May, the Iraqi Communist Party office in the Karradah neighbourhood of Baghdad was attacked by unidentified assailants with two explosive devices, causing no casualties.

22. In the late evening of 6 June, an illegal ammunition storage facility in a densely populated neighbourhood of Sadr City in Baghdad exploded, with reports suggesting that 10 people had been killed and 19 wounded. The Prime Minister instructed the Ministry of the Interior to investigate the incident, recalling an executive order of

2017 instructing the security forces to confiscate weapons and ammunition stored by entities other than the security forces. Muqtada al-Sadr announced the formation of a separate committee to investigate the incident, which some had attributed to a Sadr-affiliated armed group.

23. The General Staff of the Armed Forces of Turkey announced that Turkey was continuing to conduct military operations on Kurdistan Workers' Party targets near the Iraqi-Turkish border in northern Iraq, including between 17 and 25 May and between 1 and 16 June. In May and June, Turkey also carried out limited ground operations in the Hakurk area in northern Erbil Governorate. On 3 June, representatives of the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan, the Movement for Change and several other Kurdish political parties issued a statement protesting against the reported Turkish military operations in the Sidakan subdistrict of Erbil Governorate. They called upon the regional and federal Governments to "prevent further Turkish incursions". On 5 June, during his weekly press conference, the Prime Minister of Iraq confirmed that there was a modest Turkish military presence in northern Iraq and called upon Turkey to respect the sovereignty of Iraq. On 12 June, he confirmed that Iraq was closely following reports of Turkish military operations near the Qandil Mountains.

24. On 16 May, the Prime Minister confirmed that the Iraqi Air Force had carried out air strikes against ISIL targets in the Syrian Arab Republic, in coordination with the Government of that country. On 30 May, he announced that it had carried out another air strike against an ISIL target in the Syrian Arab Republic, emphasizing that his country's focus was on eliminating terrorism on the Iraqi-Syrian border and that it did not seek to interfere in the internal affairs of the Syrian Arab Republic.

25. On 18 June, the Popular Mobilization Commission stated that on 17 June an air strike against units of popular mobilization forces on the Syrian side of the border area with Iraq had resulted in numerous casualties. The Commission called upon the United States to clarify the incident. The same day, the Iraqi Joint Operations Command issued a statement in which it indicated that no members of the Iraqi security forces, including popular mobilization forces fighters, had been hit by any air strike. The Joint Operations Command noted that, while "units operating inside Syria" were not part of the Iraqi security forces, an investigation into which "entities" were responsible for the loss of lives of "Iraqi youth" would be opened. The international counter-ISIL coalition issued a statement that it was aware of reports of a strike near Albu Kamal that had killed and wounded several members of an unidentified force on 17 June and that there were no strikes by United States or coalition forces in that area at the time in question. The next day, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Iraq issued a statement in which it rejected and condemned the air operations targeting forces present in "the areas of fighting ISIL", whether in Iraq, the Syrian Arab Republic or elsewhere. The Ministry also underlined the importance of permanent and careful coordination between the international counter-ISIL coalition and the forces facing the terrorist organizations on the ground.

D. Regional and international developments

26. On 15 May, the Iraqi Council of Representatives approved a cooperation agreement between the Governments of Iraq and the Syrian Arab Republic. On 29 May, Muqtada al-Sadr travelled to Kuwait, where he was received by the Emir.

27. Following the elections, the Speaker met the United States Special Presidential Envoy for the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS, Brett McGurk, on 13 May to discuss political and security developments in Iraq and in the region. Mr. McGurk then travelled to Erbil to meet the Prime Minister of the Kurdistan Region. Key political

players also continued to meet representatives of the Islamic Republic of Iran and Turkey and other regional and international partners to discuss the elections and the formation of a new Government. On 17 May, the Prime Minister discussed in a telephone call with his Turkish counterpart, Binali Yıldırım, the deepening of bilateral ties between Iraq and Turkey and regional cooperation. The latter stressed the interest of Turkey in the stability of Iraq and the prosperity of its people.

28. On 3 June, the Minister of Water Resources, Muhsin al-Shammari, presented a report to the Council of Representatives recommending that the Government of Turkey be requested to delay the filling of the Ilisu dam on the Tigris River upstream of Iraq, which is suffering from severe water shortages. The previous day, the Vice-President (Mr. al-Maliki) had called upon the Government of Turkey to work together closely with Iraq on the issue. On 4 June, the Deputy Speaker, Humam Hamoudi, announced that the Council would request the Grand National Assembly of Turkey to postpone the filling of the reservoir by three months. On 6 June, the Prime Minister confirmed that dialogue with Turkey was ongoing, emphasizing that sufficient drinking water would remain available. On 7 June, the Ambassador of Turkey to Iraq, Fatih Yıldız, announced at a press conference in Baghdad that his Government had agreed to delay the filling of the dam until 1 July, in consideration of the needs of Iraq.

III. Update on the activities of the Mission and the United Nations country team

A. Political activities

29. My Special Representative for Iraq and Deputy Special Representative for Political Affairs and Electoral Assistance continued to engage with the Independent High Electoral Commission, representatives of political parties, government officials, parliamentarians, women's groups, civil society and religious and community leaders. On election day, my Special Representative and my Deputy Special Representatives for Political Affairs and Electoral Assistance and for Humanitarian Affairs visited polling stations in Fallujah, Kirkuk and Erbil, including camps for internally displaced persons and other communities, to see how the electoral process unfolded. In my statement on 13 May, I congratulated the people of Iraq on the holding of parliamentary elections and saluted the tireless efforts of electoral officials, party agents and the security forces in making the elections largely peaceful and orderly.

30. Following the elections, several political leaders and political parties, notably in Erbil, Kirkuk and Sulaymaniyah Governorates, raised concerns with UNAMI over alleged electoral fraud. My Special Representative called upon the Independent High Electoral Commission to act expeditiously and seriously to address all complaints, including, if necessary, to consider conducting a partial manual recount in selected locations, notably in Kirkuk Governorate. He called for such measures to be taken in full transparency and to be witnessed by stakeholders, to strengthen confidence in the process. He urged the Commission to continue to safeguard the integrity of all electoral materials and equipment and to cooperate fully with and abide by the decisions of the Electoral Judicial Panel. Meanwhile, political actors and their supporters were urged to uphold the peace while electoral appeals were being adjudicated through the established legal channels.

31. On 11 and 12 June, respectively, my Special Representative and Deputy Special Representative for Political Affairs and Electoral Assistance met the President of the Supreme Judicial Council, Faiq Zaidan, and the nine judges appointed to perform the functions of the Independent High Electoral Commission to discuss preparations for

the recount as provided by the amendment to the Council of Representatives Elections Law of 6 June. All interlocutors emphasized the necessity of robust United Nations support in the recount process.

32. Within the framework of the United Nations-mediated Electoral Charter of Honour, my Deputy Special Representative for Political Affairs and Electoral Assistance continued to hold meetings with political parties and key political figures in Baghdad and Erbil, in the presence of representatives of the Independent High Electoral Commission and the electoral security unit of the Ministry of the Interior, to discuss concerns over the conduct of the elections. My Special Representative and Deputy Special Representative underlined the readiness of the United Nations to provide electoral advice and expertise in support of any activities and measures required to retain confidence in the electoral process.

33. As part of the post-election phase, my Special Representative and Deputy Special Representative for Political Affairs and Electoral Assistance also met numerous political leaders and actors, including women and minorities. They urged their interlocutors to prioritize inclusive, non-sectarian dialogue and to ensure the swift formation of a new, representative, national Government that reflected the will of the people, based on the principles of patriotism and citizenship with equal rights. They urged political leaders to ensure the full participation of women in the formation of the next Government, and their representation at the highest levels in political and decision-making structures. As part of UNAMI advocacy efforts to promote the effective participation and representation of women in political and decision-making processes, my Deputy Special Representative for Political Affairs and Electoral Assistance launched the #WhyNot (#Shakobeha) campaign with short films introducing successful women political activists, as well as men championing women's participation in political processes.

34. Although negotiations to promote the normalization of relations between the federal Government and the Kurdistan Regional Government were largely suspended over the electoral campaign period, UNAMI remained engaged with the main stakeholders. A renewed partnership of dialogue with the new Government will be required to address outstanding issues, including oil and gas management and revenue, the disputed internal boundaries and the status of Kirkuk Governorate. Meanwhile, UNAMI is carrying out a series of engagements with the younger generation in the Kurdistan Region to foster mutual understanding and to seek political views from communities at the grass-roots level.

B. Electoral assistance

35. In the run-up to the parliamentary elections, and at the request of the Independent High Electoral Commission, UNAMI and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) provided additional electoral expertise and resources. In addition to existing operational and management support, specialist staff were deployed to cover issues including election results management, information technology, database management, field coordination, electoral procedures and training, observer coordination, public outreach and electoral complaints. UNAMI supported the Commission in discussions with the two electoral technology suppliers to address issues relating to the complementarity of the supplied devices and witnessed five simulation exercises undertaken by the Commission and the vendors. UNAMI also submitted written advisories to the Commission, including on the participation of internally displaced persons, election technologies and expectation management during the results announcement.

36. UNAMI facilitated the signature by some 30 parties of the Electoral Charter of Honour and then convened a weekly follow-up committee in Baghdad, throughout the electoral campaign and into the post-election period, to address campaigning violations and ensure adherence to the Charter. The Charter served as a useful convening mechanism for political parties to discuss the electoral process collectively, with most of the political leaders calling upon their candidates to respect its provisions. At the request of Kurdish political parties, UNAMI established a similar charter and follow-up committee in Erbil for them.

37. On election day, UNAMI and the United Nations country team deployed 26 teams of electoral watchers who visited more than 200 polling locations, including regular polling stations and stations for internally displaced persons in Baghdad, Basrah, Kirkuk, Erbil, Dahuk and Sulaymaniyah Governorates. They provided extensive and regular updates that were fed into the reporting of the ad hoc United Nations reporting unit.

C. Human rights and rule of law developments and activities

38. Armed conflict, terrorism and acts of violence continued to take a heavy toll on civilians. Civilian casualties increased in May, compared with April, with 95 civilians killed and 163 wounded, owing largely to two ISIL mass-casualty suicide bombings, one carried out by a 9-year-old child and the other by a juvenile aged between 15 and 16 years. This was, nonetheless, a far lower number than in the same month in 2017. In the first half of June, at least 31 civilians were killed and 92 wounded. Of these, 2 were killed and 50 wounded when improvised explosive devices detonated in civilian populated areas in Kirkuk city centre and in Khalis district centre, in Diyala Governorate. The overall trend since October 2017, of relatively low civilian casualties, nevertheless continues, reflecting a reduction in hostilities between the Iraqi security forces and ISIL.

39. The leading cause of civilian casualties remains the use by ISIL of improvised explosive devices, a particular threat to civilians in Baghdad, Diyala, Ninawa, Kirkuk and Anbar Governorates. Other tactics used by the terrorist group included targeting first responders assisting victims, killings and abductions at fake checkpoints, organized attacks on remote villages and the shelling of polling stations during the elections.

40. On 3 June, the Department of Yazidi Affairs in the Ministry of Awqaf and Religious Affairs of the Kurdistan Regional Government reported that, of the 6,417 Yazidis (3,548 female and 2,869 male) abducted by ISIL since August 2014, fewer than half had been freed or escaped. On the same day, the Department also reported that 3,117 Yazidis (1,452 female and 1,665 male) remained in ISIL captivity or were missing.

41. Iraqi courts continued to issue death sentences for terrorism-related crimes. To date in 2018, the Supreme Judicial Council has publicly announced the imposition of 41 death sentences for terrorism-related crimes, including against 24 women, 23 of whom were foreigners (17 Turks, 3 Kyrgyz, 2 Azerbaijanis and 1 German). On 16 April, the Ministry of Justice announced that 13 executions had been carried out in 2018, including 11 for terrorism-related crimes. The Government has not responded to the request by UNAMI for information on terrorism-related indictments, convictions and death penalty sentences and on where and when executions have been carried out.

42. Bodies of civilians continued to be recovered from the rubble in Mosul. On 10 May, the Prime Minister ordered the establishment of a committee to recover the

bodies. The civilian defence corps informed UNAMI that 4,160 bodies had been recovered to date.

43. Mass graves continued to be discovered in areas previously under ISIL control. On 2 April, a mass grave containing 51 bodies of Iraqi security forces personnel was discovered in Mosul. On 6 April, a mass grave containing 22 bodies of former security personnel and Independent High Electoral Commission employees was also discovered in Mosul. Both mass graves reportedly contain ISIL victims. Since June 2014, UNAMI has recorded the discovery of at least 124 mass graves, the majority of which are believed to contain ISIL victims (as reported to UNAMI, from 6,379 to 12,878 victims). UNAMI also continued to advocate the appropriate protection of mass graves in order to collect, secure and preserve evidence.

44. UNAMI continues its engagement on ISIL accountability. In preparation for the deployment of an independent investigative team, pursuant to Security Council resolution 2379 (2017), to support Iraqi efforts to hold the group accountable for its crimes committed in Iraq, UNAMI supported a mission to meet relevant counterparts and collect information in order to prepare for the establishment of the team on the ground. On 31 May, I appointed Karim Khan as the Special Adviser and Head of the Investigative Team.

45. The country task force on monitoring and reporting, co-chaired by UNAMI and the United Nations Children's Fund, verified five grave violations against children resulting in the killing of 10 boys and the maiming of 3 boys. The country task force is working towards finalizing an action plan with the Government to prevent and end the recruitment and use of children. Progress is also being made on establishing a group of friends of children and armed conflict, to enable the international community in Iraq to better address related issues in the country.

46. Information on sexual violence remains difficult to obtain as a result of stigma and fear of reprisals. Notwithstanding these difficulties, the Monitoring, Analysis and Reporting Arrangements Technical Working Group on Conflict-related Sexual Violence continued its efforts to analyse trends and patterns in relation to conflict-related sexual violence with a view to enhancing responses, advocacy and accountability. UNAMI continued to hold discussions with the Government on the implementation of the joint communiqué on the prevention of and response to conflict-related sexual violence of 2016, including in relation to accountability for sexual violence crimes. The coordination team on Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) held a meeting in Baghdad on 9 May and another in Erbil on 15 and 16 May and agreed on the pillars for the second national action plan on the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) and finalized the report on the first plan.

47. According to the Independent High Electoral Commission, 2,009 female candidates participated in the parliamentary elections. During the campaign period, posters of female candidates were vandalized and photographs allegedly showing candidates wearing revealing clothing were posted online. Some female candidates withdrew following threats and intimidation. My Special Representative issued a statement to condemn the threats and encourage women to press ahead with their campaigns.

48. On 21 May, following several months of advocacy efforts led by the United Nations Population Fund, the Secretary-General of the Iraqi Council of Ministers, Mahdi al-Allaq, approved a proposal to amend welfare legislation to introduce a reference to shelter services for gender-based violence survivors, aimed at providing a legal basis for establishing such shelters.

49. Between 1 and 3 May, a joint Office of Counter-Terrorism and Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate scoping mission visited Iraq to identify

needs and priorities in the areas of developing youth skills through technical and vocational training institutes, to support efforts to prevent violent extremism, counter the financing of terrorism, develop a comprehensive national counter-terrorism strategy and counter terrorist narratives through strategic communications. The visit was conducted as a follow-up to the consultations held between the heads of the Office and the Directorate and the Iraqi authorities in early March. The scoping mission participants held meetings with United Nations country team officials and representatives of key government ministries and agencies, diplomatic missions and relevant international organizations. The Office is now preparing project concept notes for discussion with the Iraqi authorities, UNAMI and relevant United Nations country team officials.

D. Humanitarian assistance, stabilization and development

50. The humanitarian crisis in Iraq continues, despite a number of displaced families returning to their communities. By the end of May, more than 3.8 million Iraqis had returned to their area of origin, but more than 2.1 million remain displaced and require humanitarian assistance. The returns process continues to be dynamic, as new and secondary displacements are being recorded. Implementing partners of the 2018 Humanitarian Response Plan, aiming to provide emergency support to 3.4 million highly vulnerable Iraqis, have reached up to 1 million (24 per cent) of those targeted between January and March with some form of humanitarian assistance. However, the Plan's funding is still low: of the \$569 million required, only \$253 million (45 per cent) in donor contributions had been received by June.

51. During the parliamentary elections, humanitarian partners advocated the right to vote for all Iraqi citizens, including displaced persons and returnees. Accordingly, the humanitarian community developed guidance documents in English and Arabic for humanitarian workers who were fulfilling their regular duties, as well as best practice recommendations, which were submitted to the Independent High Electoral Commission through the UNAMI Electoral Assistance Office, aiming to ensure respect for humanitarian principles. Nevertheless, more than 64 suspected election-related protection incidents were recorded by the protection cluster, which were subsequently submitted to the Commission for investigation. The continued presence of armed actors in some camps across Iraq and reports of some attacks by them on humanitarian personnel, as well as reports of sexual harassment of women and girls with perceived ties to ISIL, detention and disappearance, recruitment activities inside the camps, restrictions on freedom of movement and threats of forced return, remain a grave concern.

52. The clearance of explosive hazards in Mosul and Fallujah continued. Several suspected ISIL weapons and ammunition manufacturing facilities were also discovered in the Khatunyah neighbourhood of Mosul. During the reconstruction of a bridge in Fallujah, two suspected explosive hazards were found, prompting the Mine Action Service of the United Nations to deploy an improvised explosive device disposal team, which removed the devices and allowed work to proceed. Some 18,742 explosive hazards have been removed from Mosul and Fallujah since the beginning of 2018, reducing the threat to returning civilians and enabling the reconstruction of infrastructure.

53. In response to the suspected explosive hazard contamination in Hawijah district, the Mine Action Service established a presence in Kirkuk. As the local police are particularly vulnerable to explosive hazard threats, an explosive hazard first responder course was provided in Kirkuk Governorate in June to mitigate the risks of explosive hazard accidents. A total of 87 police officers have been trained to date. Following efforts by the Government of Iraq, the international community and the

Service, two additional non-governmental mine action organizations were registered by the Government and will become operational once their accreditation is completed.

54. The UNDP Funding Facility for Stabilization continued to facilitate the return of displaced persons, to lay the groundwork for reconstruction and recovery and to safeguard against the resurgence of violence and extremism. More than 2,400 projects have been completed, are ongoing or are planned across liberated areas in Anbar, Ninawa, Salah al-Din, Diyala and Kirkuk Governorates. The Mosul University rehabilitation project reached an important milestone, with the opening of the women's education building, the science building and the women's dormitories.

55. The reconstruction of two major bridges in Anbar Governorate — the Palestine and Japanese highway bridges — has begun. Valued at \$18 million, the project will benefit the entire governorate, encourage the return of displaced persons and improve trade and commerce, in particular between Iraq and Jordan. In Qa'im, Rawah and Anah, three towns in western Anbar Governorate liberated from ISIL in December 2017, the first stabilization projects have begun, including two electricity projects, four water treatment plants and three rubble removal projects. Approximately 41 stabilization projects have been earmarked for the first phase, with another 109 awaiting the necessary funding.

56. Following the Kuwait International Conference for the Reconstruction of Iraq, held in February, the Prime Minister launched a national development plan covering the period 2018–2022 on 9 May, which includes priorities outlined in the Iraq reconstruction and development framework for the period 2018–2027 and the poverty reduction strategy for the period 2018–2022.

57. The United Nations system in Iraq began the process of developing a new United Nations Development Assistance Framework, covering the period 2020–2024, to align its interventions with the Government's priorities, with a focus on implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. In this connection, the road map has been adopted by the United Nations country team and the regional Peer Support Group; the data collection phase of the common country analysis has begun. In the interim, before the implementation of the new Framework, the United Nations country team will carry out its interventions through a short-term recovery and resilience programme for Iraq.

58. On 17 May, my Deputy Special Representative for Development and Humanitarian Affairs participated in the biweekly conference call between senior officers on reconstruction and development in Iraq. In the call, participants shared updates on reforms and plans for engaging with the new Council of Representatives on reconstruction, recovery and development and on private sector investment for the country's reconstruction. Participants exchanged views on the Iraq Reconstruction and Development Financing Facility and also reiterated the importance of establishing a Baghdad-level coordination mechanism for sharing information and building consensus among partners on reconstruction, recovery and development initiatives.

59. In line with the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals, in particular Goal 2 on zero hunger, the World Food Programme undertook a zero hunger strategic review to formulate policies, institutional changes and investments to achieve the Goal. The review was conducted by representatives of relevant government institutions, civil society organizations and the private sector, under the leadership of the Secretary-General of the Council of Ministers. The results were presented on 10 May in the presence of my Deputy Special Representative for Development and Humanitarian Affairs. Improving safety-net instruments, enhancing sustainable agricultural production, addressing poor nutrition, increasing

employment, especially among young people and women, and reforming marketing, trade and pricing policies were identified as priorities.

60. On 7 May, my Special Representative participated in the annual planning retreat of the United Nations Inter-Agency Gender Task Force in Erbil. The Task Force aims to promote women's empowerment as set out in the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and the Sustainable Development Goals. Participants developed the Task Force's strategic priorities for the period 2018–2019 and annual workplan. My Special Representative highlighted the critical importance of promoting gender equality and women's empowerment and the need to continuously support victims of ISIL and open more spaces for women in the political and economic domains.

E. Security and operational issues

61. The United Nations in Iraq continued to implement robust security risk mitigation measures, so as to provide an adequate level of safety and security for programme delivery in a complex environment. There are 886 international and 1,798 national staff members operating from seven United Nations offices across the country. Despite significant challenges, the United Nations continues to engage in political, human rights, humanitarian and development activities in close coordination with the Government. The Department of Safety and Security intensified monitoring and reporting of security events and developments in the run-up to and during the parliamentary elections.

62. Pursuant to my letter dated 17 May 2018 addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/2018/479), UNAMI continues to take forward the implementation of the recommendations of the independent, external assessment. The Mission has strengthened its regular reporting on mandated implementation, emphasizing its coordinated efforts with the United Nations country team in thematic areas including reconciliation, elections and human rights. Joint planning and reporting efforts have improved the use of thematic coordination mechanisms — such as those on reconciliation, gender and strategic communication — and the operations management team.

63. UNAMI is taking measures to identify areas within its structure for potential efficiencies, in line with the recommendations of the assessment, to be presented as appropriate to the relevant United Nations budgetary bodies. In this context, it is preparing to conduct a review of the Integrated Coordination Office for Development and Humanitarian Affairs, with UNDP and the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs providing experts to participate in the assessment. The findings of the assessment and the introduction of a national United Nations Volunteers programme will be presented to the appropriate budgetary bodies.

64. The operations management team, currently chaired by UNDP, is leading and coordinating efforts to submit the requisite documents to the International Civil Service Commission for a review of the rest and recuperation cycle in all duty stations in Iraq.

65. The Department of Safety and Security will lead the second part of the assessment of the security architecture in Iraq, which is scheduled to be conducted in the third quarter of 2018. It will include further examination of facility perimeter protection and access control measures in Baghdad, Erbil and Kirkuk.

66. As requested by the Security Council, my Special Representative presented the short-term and long-term priorities and objectives of UNAMI and the United Nations country team during his briefing to the Council on 30 May and also clarified the

division of labour among United Nations entities. The priorities and objectives are intended for further discussion with the Council and the Government, with the aim of achieving alignment between the needs of the country and the activities and work of the United Nations.

67. On 14 June, the Security Council adopted resolution 2421 (2018), by which it extended the mandate of UNAMI until 31 May 2019. The Mission is authorized, *inter alia*, to prioritize the provision of advice, support and assistance to the Government and people of Iraq on advancing inclusive, political dialogue and national and community-level reconciliation and to further advise, support and assist the Government and the Independent High Electoral Commission on the development processes for holding elections and referendums. The Kurdistan regional parliamentary elections are scheduled for 30 September 2018, while the nationwide provincial council elections are to be held on 22 December 2018.

IV. Observations

68. The parliamentary elections constituted a significant milestone as the first since the defeat of ISIL. I applaud the patriotism and determination of all those Iraqis who participated, in particular those internally displaced persons who voted despite the difficult conditions in some areas. I also applaud the commitment and vigilance of the Iraqi security forces in ensuring a largely peaceful and orderly electoral process. I commend the Independent High Electoral Commission on its efforts to conduct an electoral process within the constitutional timeline, notwithstanding the tight deadlines and myriad organizational and technical challenges.

69. I congratulate the political parties and candidates for their participation in the elections and their contribution to fostering democracy. I encourage them to be magnanimous in electoral victory and gracious in defeat. The timely certification of the election results will pave the way for the convening of the new parliament and the formation of the next Government, in accordance with the Constitution. I urge political parties to ensure that women robustly participate in the formation process and are strongly represented in the new Government.

70. I note the concerns expressed by a number of parties regarding alleged electoral fraud, in addition to the decision by the Council of Representatives to initiate a manual recount of the ballots. The United Nations stands ready to scale up technical assistance, if requested. Most importantly, I urge all political actors and their supporters to uphold the peace and remain committed to resolving any electoral disputes through established legal channels, as stipulated in the Electoral Charter of Honour that they signed, witnessed by representatives of the United Nations, in the presence of all other party representatives.

71. The low voter turnout in the parliamentary elections sends a clear message. I urge Iraqi political leaders and representatives to draw the necessary conclusions as to the need for improved representation, justice for all, democratic accountability and good governance. I call upon the political establishment to ensure the swift formation of a truly national Government that reflects the will and addresses the concerns of the people.

72. I am encouraged by the level of communication between Baghdad and Erbil during the government formation process and call upon both sides to maintain the momentum and tackle other outstanding issues through dialogue. My Special Representative and his colleagues in UNAMI stand ready to support and facilitate discussions, if requested by both sides.

73. The Government continued to reach out to neighbouring countries and other international partners to strengthen bilateral relations, combat terrorism and violent extremism and advance mutual political, economic and security interests. I am encouraged that more than 1,085 electoral observers from the region and other countries came to assist in observing the elections. This is a clear indication of the international community's commitment to helping the Government and people of Iraq to rebuild their nation. I strongly encourage a continued focus on stabilization and reconstruction and call upon the international community to support Iraqi efforts to ensure better governance and service delivery.

74. Even though civilian casualties in April were the lowest since UNAMI began publicly reporting such casualties in Iraq in 2012, ISIL remnants continue to kill and wound civilians in several governorates, including Anbar, Baghdad, Diyala, Kirkuk, Ninawa and Salah al-Din. I encourage the Government to continue its efforts to counter terrorism and violent extremism, in accordance with international humanitarian law and international human rights law.

75. Iraqi women and children with perceived ties to ISIL experience serious protection concerns in camps, including denial of assistance, restrictions on freedom of movement, sexual harassment, rape and sexual exploitation. I condemn in the strongest terms all violations of international humanitarian law and international human rights law, including any form of sexual exploitation and abuse of displaced persons and refugees. The United Nations will continue to raise awareness and undertake capacity-building, reporting, referral and follow-up in relation to these issues.

76. I strongly urge the Government to continue to ensure the conditions necessary for the voluntary, safe and dignified return of the remaining displaced persons and to redouble its efforts to respect the civilian and humanitarian character of camps, in line with the Prime Minister's directive. I also call upon Member States to provide timely support to humanitarian response and stabilization efforts. In this critical period, I urge Member States to provide the immediate humanitarian support required by the displaced population, help with the stabilization of the liberated areas and support projects aimed at returning resilience to the social fabric of such communities.

77. Lastly, I should like to welcome Marta Ruedas, who has taken up her functions as my Deputy Special Representative for Development and Humanitarian Affairs and Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator. I should also like to express my sincere appreciation to my Special Representative, Ján Kubiš, and the staff of the United Nations in Iraq for their unwavering and courageous efforts to implement the Organization's mandate under challenging circumstances.